



THE PSALMS

THE PSALMS

A New Translation

WITH THE CANTICLES OF
THE ROMAN BREVIARY

by
Ronald Knox

SHEED & WARD

New York • 1955

NIHIL OBSTAT

EDWARDUS CAN. MAHONEY, S.T.D.

Censor Deputatus

IMPRIMATUR

E. MORROGH BERNARD

Vic. Gen.

Westmonasterii, Die 22 Novembris 1946

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

INTRODUCTION¹

I SUPPOSE that if any of us were asked which figure in the Old Testament he would soonest meet, he would answer at once, King David. With all the lawless faults of his age and character, there is still a freshness and a graciousness about the record of him which make him seem real to us, and in a degree lovable to us. Let me remind you of one touching incident in his career. When he had killed the Philistine giant with the aid of his sling and a stone from the brook, he had no sword with which to cut off the monstrous head; he took out for this purpose the giant's own sword, and, perhaps because he found it too unwieldy for his boyish strength, laid it up afterwards as a trophy in the tabernacle of God. Years later, when he was fleeing from the persecution of King Saul, he found himself weaponless, and asked the priest Achimelech if he had at hand a spear or a sword. "Yes," answered the priest, "there is the sword of the Philistine, Goliath, whom thou didst slay in the Valley of Terebinth. If thou wilt take that, take it; there is none other but that." "And there is none other like that," said David; "give it me."

Poor indeed must be his store of memories, who can read those words without a thrill. There are, in all our lives, associations of boyhood which have the power to stir and to reinvigorate us. There was some personal influence which affected us strongly, some book we read which

¹ Adapted from a meditation in *Retreat for Priests*, by Ronald Knox (Sheed and Ward, 1946).

seemed to open for us new windows of experience; there was some crisis in our spiritual history which happened just here, or in just these circumstances; some resolution taken, some temptation resisted, some ambition dedicated to God. And the memory of these things can be re-awakened in us by a chance meeting, or an anniversary, or a familiar scene; we halt, and our minds go back over the years, and a virtue creeps into our sluggish veins. *Renovabitur ut aquilae juvenus tua*; the resolution, the inspiration come back to us, familiar and desirable; "There is none other like that," we say with King David, "there is none other like that; give it me."

But of all the influences which have power to restore the past, none works upon us more easily than the gift of song. Among all its mysterious qualities (and it is probably the most mysterious thing in all our common experience) music is distinguished by this, that a tune or a phrase carries with it the associations amidst which it was first, or most familiarly heard. It can bring tears to the eyes, or quicken the action of the heart, by a power not its own; it has roots in the memory. That is why an old tune or a very few hackneyed lines of poetry affect us more than any amount of modern stuff. It is true—the truth is as old as Homer—that men will sing by preference the latest song which is in the public ear. But the emotions, which these novelties arouse in us, are simple, surface emotions; if we want to be deeply moved, we must go back to the songs which have grown up with us, which breathe memories of the past. So it is, too, with a familiar poem; our own history is woven into the phrases of it, and they bring back the

impressions of a stuffy class-room or a hot Sunday afternoon in the open. And of such a piece of music or such a poem our heart says, "There is none other like that, give it me."

Christendom has many songs, and many airs and many singers. But there is one body of poetry, far older than Christendom, which has from the first entwined itself in the history of the Church, interpreted her aspirations and enshrined her experiences. It was the poetry which our Lord sang with his apostles on that last night, before they went out to Olivet. It was the poetry from which he quoted, as he hung on the Cross. It was the poetry which first sprang to the lips of the assembled disciples, when they gave thanks in a time of persecution. The Psalms of David are, as it were, the Church's nursery rhymes; it is on that music that she falls back for consolation: "There is none other like that," she says, "give it me."

The Psalms of David, we call them; learned people would have us believe that this is a false title; the collection is only an anthology by various authors. It certainly does seem reasonable, saving the better judgment of the Church, to suppose that a psalm written about the Babylonian captivity was written by somebody who had experienced it, rather than by a king who had never heard of Babylon and lived several centuries before the captivity took place. But even if you allow for that, here and there, common sense tells you that the bulk of the psalter is King David's work. In the first place, because a great literary tradition does not grow round a man's name unless he really has some literary work to his credit. Imitators do not arise until there is

something to imitate. And in the second place, because the general inspiration of the work is a single inspiration, reflecting the experiences and the outlook of a single man.

You can trace David all through the Psalms. You can read his shepherd boyhood in his fondness for pastoral metaphor: "The Lord is my shepherd . . . we are his people and sheep of his pasturing. . . . Give audience, thou that leadest Joseph with a shepherd's care." You see him as a young warrior: "Blessed be the Lord, my God, who makes these hands strong for battle, these fingers skilled in fight. . . . Not in the bow I trust, not to my sword I look for safety. . . . Who is to lead me on my march against this fortress, who is to find an entrance for me into Edom?" You see him thrown over and persecuted by his master King Saul: "Do not put your trust in princes, they are but men, they have no power to save. . . . Better trust the Lord than rely on the help of princes . . . countless as the hairs on my head are my wanton enemies. . . ." You see him fleeing for his life, an exile with a band of outlaw companions: "The Lord is my rockfastness, my stronghold, my rescuer . . . in the strength of my God I will leap over a wall. . . . I reeled under the blow, and had well nigh fallen, but still the Lord was there to aid me." You see him established in his kingdom: "The Lord who pities me and grants me safety, bowing down nations to my will . . . he drew me out of a cheerless pit where the mire had settled deep, and gave me a foothold on the rock and firm ground to tread. . . . Do not suffer the proud to trample on me, the wicked to dispossess me." You see him falling into sin and repenting: "I will be my own accuser, I said,

and confess my fault to the Lord; and with that thou didst remit the guilt of my sin. . . . Far as the east is from the west, he clears away our guilt from us." You see him fleeing from his son Absalom, betrayed by Achitophel: "But thou, my second self, my familiar friend. . . . kindness is repaid with injury, love with ill-will . . . the very man I trusted most, my own intimate friend, who shared my bread, has lifted his heel to trip me up." You see him planning, in his old age, the building of God's temple: "Never shall these eyes have sleep, these eyelids close, this brow take any rest, until I find the Lord a home, the God of Jacob a dwelling place . . . to the Lord your God let vows be made and paid; bring gifts from every side. . . . Lord, in thy great love send prosperity to Sion so that the walls of Jerusalem may be built. . . ." As Goethe's work is full of Goethe, David's work is full of David; you are haunted everywhere by the echoes of his breathless career.

All that is the basis of the Psalms, and it is overlaid with the associations which nineteen centuries of Christendom have attached to them. Some phrases are familiar to us from their use in the liturgy, some from their interpretation in ascetic or mystical theology, some because the saints have been converted by them, or have died repeating them, some because the theologians have drawn arguments from them. Thus, by association, the psalter has become a great organ of human sentiment, upon whose stops the Holy Spirit varies the moods of a divine melody; now our Lord's crucifixion is the theme, now the praises of our Lady, now the expectation of the faithful dead, now the triumph of the Church, now the Blessed Sacrament, now the aspira-

tions of the contemplative, now the Church's persecutions, now the glories of heaven. Imagine for a moment a devout Jew reading the psalter, reading the same phrases that you read, and see how different is their meaning to him: *Regina adstat ad dexteram tuam ornata auro ex Ophir . . . Et introibo ad altare Dei . . . Deus meus, Deus meus, quare me dereliquisti . . . Calicem salutis accipiam*—think what those phrases mean to him, and what they mean to you. If the psalms are the history of King David, they are also the history of Christ's Church.

And besides the public importance of the psalter, it has for each of us a private message. There are certain phrases which record landmarks in our own spiritual lives; the religious has a special meaning for *Non confundas me ab expectatione mea*; the cleric for *Dominus pars hereditatis meae*; the priest for *Tu es sacerdos in aeternum*. And most of us have had, at some time, lights of our own in reciting the Office; or verses quoted in books of meditation or in retreats will have stuck in our minds so that we hail them, when we come across them again, like a man greeting an old friend. Thus each of us, as he goes through the psalter, can trace in it a kind of secret code, a cipher by which God and the soul speak to one another.

THE PSALMS

PSALM 1

BLESSED is the man who does not guide his steps by
2 ill counsel, or linger where sinners walk, or, where
scornful souls gather, sit down to rest; the man whose
heart is set on the law of the Lord, on that law, day and
3 night, his thoughts still dwell. He stands firm as a tree
planted by running water, ready to yield its fruit when
the season comes, and never shedding its leaf; all that
4 he does will prosper. Not such, not such the wicked;
5 the wicked are like dust the wind sweeps away. Not
for the wicked, when judgement comes, to rise up and
plead their cause; sinners will have no part in the re-
6 union of the just. They walk, the just, under the eye
of the Lord's favour; the path of the wicked, how soon
is it lost to sight!

PSALM 2

2 WHAT MEANS this turmoil among the nations?
Why do the peoples cherish vain dreams? See
how the kings of the earth stand in array, how its rulers
make common cause, against the Lord, and against the
3 king he has anointed, crying, Let us break away from
4 their bondage, let us throw off their yoke! He who
dwells in heaven is laughing at their threats, the Lord

v. 1. "Scornful"; Vg. "corrupt."

[1]

5 makes light of them; and at last, in his displeasure, he
6 will speak out, his anger quelling them: Here, on
mount Sion, my sanctuary, I enthrone a king of my
7 own choice.

It is for me to proclaim the Lord's edict; Thou
art my son, the Lord's word came to me, I have
8 begotten thee this day. Ask thy will of me, and thou
shalt have the nations for thy patrimony; the very ends
9 of the world for thy domain. Thou shalt herd them
like sheep with a crook of iron, break them in pieces
10 like earthenware. Princes, take warning; learn your
11 lesson, you that rule the world. Tremble, and serve
the Lord, rejoicing in his presence, but with awe in
12 your hearts; kiss the rod, do not brave the Lord's anger,
and go astray from the sure path. When the fire of
his vengeance blazes out suddenly, happy are they who
find their refuge in him.

vv. 5, 6. Vg. "And at last, in his displeasure, he will speak out; his fierce anger will quell them. To me, he has given a kingly throne on mount Sion, his sanctuary, there to proclaim his edict."

v. 9. "Herd them like sheep"; or, according to another reading, "shatter them."

v. 12. "The rod"; the word given in the Hebrew text should mean either "purity," or "the Son."

PSALM 3

(A psalm David wrote when he fled before his son Absalom.)

- 2 **S**EE HOW they surround me, Lord, my adversaries,
3 how many rise up in arms against me; everywhere
4 voices taunting me, His God cannot save him. And
yet, Lord, thou art the shield that covers me, thou art
5 the pride that keeps my head erect. I have but to cry
out to the Lord, and my voice reaches his mountain
6 sanctuary, and there finds hearing. Safe in God's hand
7 I lay down, and slept, and have awoken; and now,
though thousands of the people set upon me from
8 every side, I will not be afraid of them. Bestir thyself,
Lord; my God, save me; thine to smite my enemies
9 on the cheek, thine to break the fangs of malice. From
the Lord all deliverance comes; thy benediction, Lord,
rests upon thy people.

PSALM 4

(To the choir-master. On stringed instruments. A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 **W**HEN I call on thy name, listen to me, O God,
and grant redress; still, in time of trouble, thou
hast brought me relief; have pity on me now, and hear

v. 8. "Thine to smite my enemies on the cheek"; Vg.
"thine to smite down the foes that wantonly assail me."

3 my prayer. Great ones of the world, will your hearts
always be hardened, will you never cease setting your
4 heart on shadows, following a lie? To the souls he
loves, be sure the Lord shews wondrous favour; when-
5 ever I call on his name, the Lord will hear me. Trem-
ble, and sin no more; take thought, as you lie awake,
6 in the silence of your hearts. Offer sacrifices with due
7 observance, and put your trust in the Lord. There are
many that languish for a sight of better times; do thou,
8 then, Lord, shew us the sunshine of thy favour. Never
did rich harvests of corn and wine bring gladness like
9 the gladness thou puttest into my heart. Even as I lie
down, sleep comes, and with sleep tranquillity; what
need, Lord, of aught but thyself to bring me confi-
dence?

v. 3. "Will your hearts always be hardened?"; the Hebrew text has, "Will my honour always be turned into reproach?"

v. 5. *Vg.* "Do not let anger betray you into sin; be ashamed, when you lie down to rest, of the thoughts that were in your hearts."

vv. 7, 8. *Vg.* "There are many that languish for a sight of better times; but already, Lord, the sunshine of thy favour has been plainly shewn to us; thou hast made me glad at heart (like) men (who) are enriched by the yield of their corn, and wine, and oil."

v. 9. *Vg.* "In peace and friendliness I will sleep and take my rest; thou, Lord, hast bidden me repose in confidence unprotected."

PSALM 5

(To the choir-master. On the flute. A psalm. Of David.)

2, 3 **L**ORD, LISTEN to my plea, let me not sigh in vain; pay
heed to my cry of petition, my King, my God. To
thee my prayer goes up, early to win thy audience;
4 early in the morning I present myself before thee and
5 watch. No evil thing claims thy Divine assent; with
6 thee baseness cannot dwell; in thy presence the rebel-
lious cannot endure. Thou hatest the wrong-doer,
7 and wilt bring the liar to destruction; bloodthirsty and
8 treacherous men the Lord holds in abhorrence. I, then,
encompassed by thy mercy, will betake myself to thy
house, and in reverence of thee bow down before thy
sanctuary.

9 Lord, do thou lead me with faithful care; clear be
10 my path, while I walk beset by enemies. In their
speech no truth can be found; their hearts are empti-
ness, their mouths gaping tombs; they use their tongues
11 to flatter. O God, pronounce thy sentence upon them,
cheat them of their hopes, cast them out in all their
12 wickedness; Lord, have they not defied thee? But for
all those who trust in thee there is joy and everlasting
triumph; thou wilt dwell among them; all those who
love thy name will boast of thee, who givest thy bene-

v. 9. "Clear be my path"; literally, "smooth thy way in my sight"; Vg. "direct my way in thy sight."

- 13 diction to the just. Lord, thou dost throw thy loving-kindness about us like a shield.

PSALM 6

(To the choir-master. On stringed instruments.
Over the Octave. A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 **L**ORD, WHEN thou dost reprove me, let it not be
3 in anger; when thou dost chastise me, let it not
4 be in displeasure. Lord, pity me; I have no strength
5 left; Lord, heal me; my limbs tremble; my spirits are
6 altogether broken; Lord, wilt thou never be content?
7 Lord, turn back, and grant a wretched soul relief; as
8 thou art ever merciful, save me. When death comes,
9 there is no more remembering thee; none can praise
10 thee in the world beneath. I am wearied out with
11 sighing; every night tears bedew my bed and drench
my pillow. Grief has dimmed my eyes, and made an
old man of me, so many are the adversaries that surround me. Depart from me, all you that traffic in iniquity; the Lord has heard my cry of distress. The Lord has heard my entreaty; I asked, and my prayer won acceptance. All my enemies will be abashed and terrified; taken aback, all in a moment, and put to shame.

PSALM 7

(A lament of David's, which he sang to the Lord because of Chus, the Benjamite.)

- 2 **O** LORD MY GOD, my confidence is in thee; save me
3 from all my pursuers, and grant me deliverance:
4 must I fall a helpless prey to the lion, to be torn in
5 pieces, with none to bring me aid? O Lord my God,
6 if I too have been at fault, if these hands are stained
7 with guilt; if I have been a false friend, and not rather
8 spared even those that wronged me, then indeed let
9 some enemy overtake me with his relentless pursuit,
10 trample me to earth, and level my pride with the dust!
11 Lord, rise up in thy anger, make thyself feared in the
12 lands of my enemies! bestir thyself, O Lord my God,
13 in defence of the laws thou thyself hast given us. All
14 the nations will gather about thee, if thou wilt come
15 back to thy throne and rule them, the Lord judging the
16 nations! Give me redress, Lord, in my uprightness, in
17 all the innocence that clothes me; surely thou wilt put
18 an end to the wrong-doing of the wicked, and prosper
19 the innocent; no thought or desire of ours can escape
20 the scrutiny of thy Divine justice.
21 From the Lord, refuge of true hearts, my protection

v. 5. Vg. "If I have avenged myself on the man who wronged me, then indeed let me go away from my adversary's presence empty-handed." Others would render the Hebrew text, "If I have wronged the man who was at peace with me, if I have wantonly despoiled my adversary."

vv. 10, 11. The word "just," here taken in v. 11 as agreeing with "God," is taken by the Vulgate in v. 12 as agreeing with "protection"; perhaps render, "my unfailing protection."

12 comes. God judges ever true; day by day his indignation
13 mounts up; if they do not repent, his sword will
14 flash bright; he has bent his bow in readiness, and
deadly are the weapons he is preparing for them; he
15 has barbed his arrows with fire. Here was a heart
pregnant with malice, that conceived only spite, and
16 gave birth only to shame! Here was one who dug a
pit and sunk it deep, and fell into a snare of his own
17 setting! All his spite will recoil on himself, all his
18 violence will fall on his own head. I will ever thank
the Lord for his just retribution, singing praises to the
name of the Lord, the most High.

PSALM 8

(To the choir-master. To the mood of the song, The
Wine-presses. A psalm. Of David.)

2 **O** LORD, our Master, how the majesty of thy name
fills all the earth! Thy greatness is high above
3 heaven itself. Thou hast made the lips of children, of

v. 12. Vg. "How just a judge God is, how strong, how patient! And must he be daily provoked to anger?"

v. 14. "For them"; Vg. "upon it."

v. 15. "Shame," that is, according to the Latin, sin; the Hebrew word has also the sense of disappointment, frustration (cf. verse 16).

v. 3. Some would interpret the Hebrew here, "thou hast founded strength through the lips of children and infants at the breast."

infants at the breast, vocal with praise, to confound thy
 enemies; to silence malicious and revengeful tongues.
 4 I look up at those heavens of thine, the work of thy
 hands, at the moon and the stars, which thou hast set
 5 in their places; what is man, Lord, that thou shouldst
 remember him? What is Adam's breed, that it should
 6 claim thy care? Thou hast placed him only a little
 below the angels, crowning him with glory and
 7 honour, and bidding him rule over the works of thy
 hands. Thou hast put them all under his dominion,
 8 the sheep and the cattle, and the wild beasts besides;
 9 the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, that travel
 10 by the sea's paths. O Lord, our Master, how the
 majesty of thy name fills all the earth!

PSALM 9A *

(To the choir-master. To the mood of the song, Mut
 Labben. A psalm. Of David.)

2 **L**ORD, I give thee all the thanks of my heart, recounting
 3 thy wonderful doings; glad and triumphant in
 thee, I will sing psalms to thy name, O God most high.

v. 6. "Below the angels"; the Hebrew can also be translated, "below God."

* Psalm 9 in the Latin combines Psalms 9 and 10 of the Hebrew text: Latin 9A, vv. 1-21: Hebrew 9; Latin 9B, vv. 22-39: Hebrew 10. Thus Psalm 10, Latin, is Psalm 11, Hebrew, etc.

4 See how my enemies turn back, how they faint and
5 melt away at the sight of thee! Thou hast given me
redress and maintained my cause; thou art there on thy
6 throne, seeing justice done. Thou hast checked the
heathen in their course; thou hast brought the wicked
7 to nothing, blotting out their name for all time. Spent
is the enemy's power, doomed to everlasting ruin; the
memory of them has died with the fall of their cities.
8 But the Lord abides for ever on the throne of judge-
9 ment he has prepared, still judging the world rightly,
10 still awarding each people its due: he is a stronghold
11 to the oppressed in time of peril and affliction. Those
who acknowledge thy name, Lord, can trust thee;
never was man forsaken that had recourse to thee.
12 Sing, then, to the Lord, who dwells in Sion, tell the
13 Gentiles of his great deeds; how he, the avenger of
blood, cares for the afflicted, does not forget them when
14 they cry to him. Have pity on me, Lord, look upon
all that I suffer at my enemies' hands; thou who didst
15 ever rescue me from the gate of death, to proclaim thy
praises at the gate of thy loved Sion, to exult in thy
16 saving power. The heathen have been caught in their
own deadly devices; their feet have been trapped in
17 the very toils they had laid; now it will be seen how
the Lord defends the right, how the wicked contrive
18 their own undoing. To the place of death the wicked
must return, heathens that have no thought of God.

v. 7. Vg. "The swords of the enemy have lost their edge for ever; thou hast rooted up their cities, and the memory of them died with the crash of their ruin."

- 19 He does not forget the helpless; their time will come;
the patience of the afflicted will not go for nothing.
20 Bestir thyself, Lord, let not human strength prevail;
21 let the heathen stand upon their trial before thee; let
the heathen, too, feel thy terrors, and learn they are
but men.

PSALM 9B

- 2 **L**ORD, why dost thou stand far off? In days of affliction,
why dost thou make no sign? The hearts of the
oppressed burn within them, so triumphant is the
3 schemer that has entrapped them; so proud of his
wicked end achieved, still robbing men, blaspheming
4 and despising the Lord. God there is none to punish
me, the sinner thinks in his pride, and makes the
5 thought his rule; still, as he goes on prospering, he
banishes thy laws from his mind, and makes light of
6 his enemies. Endless time, he thinks, cannot shake
7 his untroubled existence. His mouth overflows with
curses, and calumny, and deceit; his tongue is a store-
8 house of dissension and mischief. Ambushed he lies

v. 21. "Feel thy terrors"; Vg. "have a ruler over them."

vv. 3-5 (B). Vg. "So proud of his wicked end achieved, so well content with his knavery. What wonder if the sinner defies the Lord, thinking, for all his anger, he will never exact punishment? A heart that has no thought of God, a life ever stained with crime, eyes that are blind to thy laws, and still he has the mastery of his enemies!"

v. 8.(B). Vg. "He will agree with the rich to lie in wait at dark corners, and kill the man who never wronged him."

9 at the village gate, to kill unawares the man who never
 wronged him; his eyes are continually on his prey; like
 a lion in its lair, he watches from his hiding-place, to
 surprise the defenceless man and carry him off. So he
 10 catches him in the toils; stands there bowing and
 11 scraping, till the prey falls into his hands. Why not?
 Thinks he to himself, God has forgotten about it; God
 still turns his face away, and sees nothing.
 12 O Lord God, bestir thyself, lift up thy hand; do not
 13 forget the helpless. Why is the sinner allowed to defy
 14 God, to think he will never exact punishment? But in
 truth thou seest it; thou hast eyes for misery and dis-
 tress, and wilt take them into thy keeping. The desti-
 tute are cast on no care but thine; to thee only the
 15 orphan looks for redress. Break down the power of
 the wicked oppressor, punish his ill-doing, and let him
 16 be seen no more. The Lord will reign for ever and
 ever, while the heathen vanish from the land he
 17 loves. The sighing of the defenceless has found
 audience; thou dost listen to the prayer of the well
 18 ordered heart, dost give redress to the fatherless and the
 poor; mortal man shall make himself feared no longer.

v. 10 (B). "Bowing and scraping" (as he accosts his victim and leads him into the ambush) is the natural meaning of the words according to usage; they are sometimes taken as referring to the habits of a wild beast crouching in its lair. The Vulgate has "bows and scrapes, now that he is master of his prey."

v. 14 (B). "And wilt take them into thy keeping"; Vg. "thou wilt give them up to vengeance."

PSALM 10

(To the choir-master. Of David.)

MY TRUST is in the Lord; how is it that you say to
2 your friend, Escape, like a frightened sparrow,
to the hill-side? Escape; the rebels have strung their
bows, have arrows ready, to shoot from their hiding-
3 places at an unoffending heart; they have thrown down
all thou hadst built; what hope, now, for the just
4 man? Is not the Lord in his holy shrine, the same
Lord whose throne is in heaven, whose eye looks
on the helpless, whose glance scrutinizes the deeds of
5 men? Innocent or sinful, he reads every heart, and the
6 friends of wrong-doing are his enemies. He will rain
down sudden destruction on sinners; fire, and brim-
stone, and stormy wind, these shall be the cup he brews
7 for them. The Lord is just, and just are the deeds he
loves; none but upright souls shall enjoy his presence.

v. 6. "His enemies"; *Vg.* "the enemies of their own souls."

v. 7. "None but upright souls shall enjoy his presence";
Vg. "None but upright souls enjoy the favour of his smile."

PSALM 11

(To the choir-master. Over the octave. A psalm.
Of David.)

- 2 LORD, come to my rescue; piety is dead; in a base
3 world, true hearts have grown rare. None but
exchanges empty forms of speech with his neighbour;
nothing but deceit is found on their treacherous lips.
4 Those treacherous lips, that tongue with high-sounding
5 phrases, may the Lord destroy them utterly! With our
tongues, they say, we can do great things; our lips are
6 good friends to us; we own no master. Now, says the
Lord, I will bestir myself, on behalf of the helpless who
are so ill used, of the poor who cry out so bitterly; I will
7 win them the redress they long for. The words of the
Lord are true metal, like silver that is tested in the
crucible, the stains of earth gone, seven times refined.
8 Yes, Lord; thou wilt watch over us, and keep us ever
safe from these evil days.
9 See how the wicked come and go all around us; how
they rise to greatness, this base breed of men!

v. 6. "I will win them the redress they long for"; Vg. "I will win them redress, speak out for their cause."

v. 9. Vg. "See how the wicked come and go all around us! How high thou art above us, and yet how great the increase thou givest to a base breed of men!"

PSALM 12

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

2 LORD, must I still go all unremembered, must thy look
3 still be turned away from me? Each day brings a
fresh load of care, fresh misery to my heart; must I be
4 ever the sport of my enemies? Look upon me, O Lord
my God, and listen to me; give light to these eyes,
5 before they close in death; do not let my enemies claim
6 the mastery, my persecutors triumph over my fall! I
cast myself on thy mercy; soon may this heart boast of
redress granted, sing in praise of the Lord's bounty.

PSALM 13

(To the choir-master. Of David.)

THERE IS NO God above us, is the fond thought of
reckless hearts; warped natures everywhere and
hateful lives! There is not an innocent man among
2 them. The Lord is looking down from heaven at the
race of men, to find one soul that reflects, and makes
3 God its aim; but no, all have missed the mark and re-

v. 6. Following the Greek, the Vulgate adds at the end of this verse, "honour with psalms the name of the Lord, the most High."

vv. 1-7. This psalm is a curious literary problem; the whole of it can be found elsewhere in the Bible. Verses 1 and

- belled against him; an innocent man is nowhere to be
4 found. What, can they learn nothing, all these traf-
fickers in iniquity, who feed themselves fat on this
5 people of mine, as if it were bread for their eating, and
6 never invoke the Lord's name? What wonder if fear
unmans them? Just souls the Lord comforts with his
presence; but you have thwarted the hopes of the
oppressed; it is for the just to put their confidence in
7 the Lord. Oh, may Sion bring deliverance to Israel!
Day of gladness for Jacob, day of Israel's triumph,
when the Lord restores the fortunes of his own people.

PSALM 14

(A psalm. Of David.)

- WHO is IT, Lord, that will make his home in thy
tabernacle, rest on the mountain where thy
2 sanctuary is? One that guides his steps without fault,
and gives to all their due; one whose heart is all
3 honest purpose, who utters no treacherous word, never
4 defrauds a friend, or slanders a neighbour. He scorns
the reprobate, honours the Lord's worshippers, and is

2, with the first sentence of verse 3, and verses 4-7, reappear in Ps. 52, with some variation in verse 6. An addition to verse 3 is found in the Septuagint Greek and the Vulgate, but not in the Hebrew text. It corresponds exactly with verses 10-18 in the third chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, and appears to be a cento of Scriptural quotations taken from the following sources: Ps. 5:10; 139:4; 9:28; Is. 59:7; Ps. 35:2.

- 5 true, come what may, to his pledged word; lends without usury, and takes no bribe to condemn the innocent. He who so lives will stand firm for ever.

PSALM 15

(A Miktam. Of David.)

- 2 **K**EEP ME safe, Lord; I put my trust in thee. The
3 Lord, whom I own as my God, confess that in
4 him is all my good! There are faithful souls in this
5 land of his; wondrous delight he gives me in their
6 companionship. What do they do but lay up fresh
7 store of sorrows, that betake themselves to alien gods? I will not join with such as these in holding the assemblies where they drink blood; I will not take forbidden names on my lips. No, it is the Lord I claim for my prize, the Lord who fills my cup; thou, and no other, wilt assure my inheritance to me. No fairer lot could be mine; no nobler inheritance could I win. Blessed be the Lord, who schools me; late into the night my in-

v. 2. "In him is all my good"; Vg. "he has no need of aught that is mine."

v. 4. The first half of this sentence is very obscure in the Hebrew text; the Vulgate has, literally, "their infirmities were multiplied; after these things they made haste," of which the nearest suitable rendering seems to be "Many have sinned, and been quick to follow their evil ways." "Forbidden names"; literally, "their names"; but it can hardly be doubted that the names of the false gods are referred to. Cf. I Cor. 10:21.

- 8 most thoughts chasten me. Always I can keep the
Lord within sight; always he is at my right hand, to
9 make me stand firm. So there is gladness in my heart,
10 and rejoicing on my lips; my body, too, shall rest in
confidence that thou wilt not leave my soul in the
place of death, or allow thy faithful servant to see cor-
11 ruption. Thou wilt shew me the way of life, make me
full of gladness in thy presence; at thy right hand are
delights that will endure for ever.

PSALM 16

(A prayer. Of David.)

- L**ORD, to my just complaint give ear; do not spurn my
cry for aid. Listen to this prayer of mine; they are
2 not treacherous lips that make it. From thy hearing I
would obtain redress; I look for unerring justice from
3 thy scrutiny. Wilt thou read my heart, drawing near
in the darkness to test me as if by fire, thou wilt find
no treachery in me. Never have these lips been led
4 astray by man's evil example; still to thy law's pattern
5 thy warnings kept me true; still in thy paths my steps
were firmly planted, my feet did not stumble.
6 And now I cry to thee, the God who ever hearest me;

vv. 4, 5. Vg. "Never may I share the base thoughts of men; still mindful of thy warnings, I have kept to the paths that are hard to follow. Do thou maintain my steps firm in thy own ways, never allowing my feet to stumble."

7 turn thy ear towards me, and listen to my plea. Shew
me the signal mercy that saves a man from his enemies,
8 when he trusts thy power. Protect me as thou wouldst
the apple of thy own eye; hide me under the shelter of
9 thy wings, safe from the evil-doers who wrong me. See
10 how my enemies close about me mercilessly, their
11 hearts shut to pity, a boast on their lips! Even now
their stealthy tread closes in on me, as they watch their
12 opportunity to overthrow me, as if a lion had caught
me, eager for his prey, a young lion that waits hidden
13 in its lair. Bestir thyself, Lord; forestall him and throw
him to the ground; bare thy sword, and save me from
14 the evil-doer, raise thy hand, to rescue me from the
hands of mortal men! Mortal men indeed, that have
all their portion here on earth; whose desires thou dost
satisfy with treasures from thy store, so that their chil-
dren, too, live in abundance, and leave riches for new
15 heirs to enjoy. As for me, I will come with upright
heart into thy presence, and when thy glory dawns, I
shall be well content.

v. 7. Vg. "Shew me the signal mercy that delivers thy suppliant, when rebels defy thy power."

v. 11. Vg. "Even now they have pulled me down, and are closing in about me, their eyes fixed on the ground, avoiding mine."

v. 14. The Hebrew text here is probably corrupt. It is difficult to believe, in view of other Old Testament passages, that the wicked are here described as people whom God enriches, even in this life. The Vulgate version, which is obscure, perhaps means: "Deliver me from the evil-doer, me, thy chosen weapon, from the enemy that defies thee! Lord, shall they live to share the favours thou grantest to so few on earth, whose desires" . . . etc.

PSALM 17

(To the choir-master. Of David, the servant of the Lord. He addressed to the Lord the words of this song, on the day when God delivered him from the hand of Saul, and from the hands of all his enemies; as follows:)

- 2,3 **S**HALL I not love thee, Lord, my only defender? The Lord is my rock-fastness, my stronghold, my rescuer; to God, my hiding place, I flee for safety; he is my shield, my weapon of deliverance, my refuge.
- 4 Praised be the Lord! When I invoke his name, I am
- 5 secure from my enemies. All about me surged the waves of death, deep flowed the tide of wrong, to
- 6 daunt me; the grave had caught me in its toils, deadly
- 7 snares had trapped my feet. One cry to the Lord, in my affliction, one word of summons to my God, and he, from his sanctuary, listened to my voice; the complaint I made before him found a hearing.
- 8 Earth thereupon shivered and shook, the very foundations of the hills quailed and quaked at his
- 9 anger; at the fiery smoke that breathed from his mouth
- 10 and nostrils, kindling coals to flame. He bade heaven stoop, and came down to earth, with a dark cloud at his
- 11 feet; he came, cherub-mounted, borne up on the wings
- 12 of the wind, shrouded in darkness, canopied with
- 13 black rain-storm and deep mist. Then, while coals

vv. 1-51. The whole of this psalm has been preserved for us independently among the records of King David's reign, with very slight variations (I Kings 22).

14 were kindled at the brightness as he came, the Lord
sent his thunder from heaven, the most High let
15 his voice be heard. How they scattered when he
rained down his arrows on them, how they fled in
16 confusion before the volleys of his lightning! The
secret springs of the rivers came to light, the very
foundations of the world were laid bare, when thou
didst threaten them, Lord, when thou didst blow upon
17 them with the breath of thy anger. Then he reached
18 down from heaven, caught hold of me, rescued me
from that flood, saved me from triumphant malice,
19 from the enemies that held me at their mercy. Evil
days, when they faced me at every turn! Yet the Lord
20 stood by me, and brought me out into freedom again;
his great love befriended me.

21 So, for my faithfulness, the Lord would requite me,
as he sees me guiltless in act, he would make return.
22 Have I not kept true to the Lord's paths? Have I not
23 been ever loyal to my God? No law of his, but I have
kept it before my eyes; no task he laid upon me have
24 I refused; ever stainless in his presence, ever watchful
25 to keep myself clear of guilt. Ever faithful, ever guilt-
26 less in act, the Lord has requited me. Lovingly dost
thou treat those who love thee, and biddest the inno-
27 cent go unharmed; open-hearted shall the open-hearted
28 find thee, the cunning thou wilt overreach. To humble
folk thou wilt bring deliverance; the proud, with their
29 haughty looks, thou wilt bring down to earth. It is

v. 13. Vg. "The clouds, too, at the brightness of his coming, parted in a storm of hail and burning coals."

thou, Lord, that keepest the lamp of my hopes still
burning; shinest on the darkness about me, O my God.
30 In thy strength I shall be proof against all attack; in the
strength of my God I will leap over a wall.

31 Such is my God, unsullied in his dealings; his prom-
ises are like metal tested in the fire; he is the sure
32 defence of all who trust in him. Who but the Lord is
God? What other refuge can there be, except our
33 God? It is he that girds me with strength, bids me
34 go on my way untroubled. He makes me sure-footed
as the deer, and gives me the freedom of the hills;
35 these hands, through him, are skilled in battle, these
36 arms are a match for any bow of bronze. Thy saving
power, Lord, is my defence, thy right hand supports
37 me; thy tender care fosters me. Through thee, my
steps are untrammelled as I go, my tread never
38 falters; I can overtake the enemies I pursue, and
39 never turn home till I have made an end of them; I can
beat them to their knees, and hurl them down at my
40 feet. Thou girdest me about with a warrior's strength;
whatever power challenges me, thou dost subdue
41 before me, putting my enemies to flight, and throwing
42 all their malice into confusion. Loudly they cry out
to the Lord, bereft of aid, but he makes no answer to
43 their cries. I can crush them to pieces, like the dust
which the wind blows along; I can trample them down
like mire from the streets.

v. 36. "Thy tender care is my reinforcement"; Vg. "And still thou humblest me for my correction, I am schooled by thy chastisement."

44 Thou wilt deliver me, then, from sedition among my
people; nay, thou givest me rule over other nations,
45 alien folk becoming my subjects and listening atten-
tively to my word. Strangers come cringing before
46 me, slinking out pale-cheeked from their strongholds.
47 Blessed be the living Lord who is my refuge, praised
48 be the God who delivers me! It is thou, my God, that
bringest me redress, that bendest peoples to my will,
49 that savest me from the spite of my enemies; so that
I am high above the reach of their assaults, proof
50 against their violence. Then, Lord, I will give thee
thanks in the hearing of all the nations, singing in
51 praise of thy name; how powerful thou art to protect
the king thou hast chosen, how merciful towards him
whom thou hast anointed, towards David, and David's
line for ever.

PSALM 18

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

2 SEE HOW the skies proclaim God's glory, how the
3 vault of heaven betrays his craftsmanship! Each
day echoes its secret to the next, each night passes on
4 to the next its revelation of knowledge; no word, no

v. 4. The meaning of the Hebrew text here is quite uncertain.

- 5 accent of theirs that does not make itself heard, till
their utterance fills every land, till their message reaches
the ends of the world. In these, he has made a pavilion
6 for the sun, which comes out as a bridegroom comes
from his bed, and exults like some great runner who
7 sees the track before him. Here, at one end of heaven,
is its starting place, and its course reaches to the other;
no one can escape its burning heat.
- 8 The Lord's perfect law, how it brings the soul back
to life; the Lord's unchallengeable decrees, how they
9 make the simple learned! How plain are the duties
which the Lord enjoins, the treasure of man's heart;
how clear is the commandment the Lord gives, the
10 enlightenment of man's eyes! How sacred a thing
is the fear of the Lord, which is binding for ever; how
unerring are the awards which the Lord makes, one
11 and all giving proof of their justice! All these are more
precious than gold, than a hoard of pure gold, sweeter
12 than the honey, dripping from its comb. By these I,
13 thy servant, live, nor bestow my pains amiss. And
yet, who knows his own frailties? If I have sinned
14 unwittingly, do thou absolve me. Keep me ever, thy
own servant, far from pride; so long as this does not

v. 5. *Vg.* "In it (the sun) he has made his tabernacle," perhaps in the sense that the sun was his abiding witness in heaven (Ps. 88:38), as his tabernacle was on earth.

v. 14. The Greek Septuagint, followed by the Vulgate, has preserved a reading which differs only by one letter from our present Hebrew text, and gives a more natural sense: "Keep me ever thy own servant, far from (the worship of) alien gods."

15 lord it over me, I will yet be without fault, I will yet
be innocent of the great sin. Every word on my lips,
every thought in my heart, what thou wouldst have
it be, O Lord, my defender, my redeemer!

PSALM 19

(To the end; a psalm of David.)

2 THE LORD listen to thee in thy time of need, the
3 power of Israel's God be thy protection! May he
send thee aid from his holy place, watch over thee,
4 there on mount Sion; may he remember all thy offer-
5 ings, and find savour in thy burnt-sacrifice. May he
grant thee what thy heart desires, crown thy hopes
6 with fulfilment. So may we rejoice at thy deliverance,
extolling the name of the Lord our God; abundantly
7 may he grant thy prayer. Shall I doubt that the Lord
protects the king he has anointed, will listen to him
from his sanctuary in heaven? Is not his right hand
8 strong to save? Let others talk of horses and chariots;
9 our refuge is the name of the Lord our God. Stumbled
10 and fallen they, while we stand firm on our feet. O
Lord, save the king, and hear us in the hour when we
call upon thee.

v. 10. Some would understand the Hebrew text as mean-
ing, "O Lord, our King, save us."

PSALM 20

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 **W**ELL MAY the king rejoice, Lord, in thy protection, well may he triumph in thy saving power!
3 Never a wish in his heart hast thou disappointed, never
4 a prayer on his lips denied. With abundant blessing thou dost meet him on his way, dost set a jewelled
5 crown on his head. Prays he for life? Long continuance of his reign thou dost grant him; to last unfailing
6 till the end of time. Great is the renown thy protection has won for him; glory and high honour thou hast
7 made his. An everlasting monument of thy goodness, comforted by the smile of thy favour, he stands firm,
8 trusting in the Lord; the favour of the most High is with him.
- 9 Ay, but thy enemies—they shall feel thy power; that
10 right hand will not leave their malice unpunished. At thy frown, they will wither away like grass in the oven; whirled away by the Lord's anger, burnt up in its
11 flames. Thou wilt rid the land of their breed, their
12 race will vanish from the world of men. See how all their false designs against thee, all their plots come to
13 nothing! Thou wilt rout them; bent is thy bow to meet their onslaught.

vv. 9-13. These verses are perhaps addressed to God, more probably to the king himself.

v. 13. Vg. "Thou wilt direct their faces among (or by means of) thy men (or things) left over." Possibly the picture

- 14 Stand high above us, Lord, in thy protecting strength; our song, our psalm, shall be of thy greatness.

PSALM 21

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 **M**Y God, my God, look upon me; why hast thou
forsaken me? Loudly I call, but my prayer
3 cannot reach thee. Thou dost not answer, my God;
when I cry out to thee day and night, thou dost not
4 heed. Thou art there none the less, dwelling in the
5 holy place; Israel's ancient boast. It was in thee that
our fathers trusted, and thou didst reward their trust by
6 delivering them; they cried to thee, and rescue came;
7 no need to be ashamed of such trust as theirs. But I,
poor worm, have no manhood left; I am a by-word
8 to all, the laughing-stock of the rabble. All those who
catch sight of me fall to mocking; mouthing out in-
9 sults, while they toss their heads in scorn, He com-
mitted himself to the Lord, why does not the Lord
come to his rescue, and set his favourite free?

is that of a commander who reserves his second-best troops to intercept a fleeing enemy, or "heads off" the enemy into an ambush.

v. 2. In the second half of the verse, the Vulgate has, "Why cannot my sinful words reach thee, who art my salvation?"

v. 3. "Thou dost not heed"; Vg. "I am patient still" (literally, "it does not turn to rashness for me"). The Hebrew text is ordinarily interpreted, "and I can find no rest."

- 10 What hand but thine drew me out from my mother's
womb? Who else was my refuge when I hung at the
11 breast? From the hour of my birth, thou art my
guardian; since I left my mother's womb, thou art my
12 God! Do not leave me now, when trouble is close at
13 hand; stand near, when I have none to help me. My
enemies ring me round, packed close as a herd of
14 oxen, strong as bulls from Basan; so might a lion
15 threaten me with its jaws, roaring for its prey. I am
spent as spilt water, all my bones out of joint, my
16 heart turned to molten wax within me; parched is my
throat, like clay in the baking, and my tongue sticks
17 fast in my mouth; thou hast laid me in the dust, to
die. Prowling about me like a pack of dogs, their
wicked conspiracy hedges me in; they have torn holes
18 in my hands and feet; I can count my bones one by
one; and they stand there watching me, gazing at me.
19 They divide my spoils among them, cast lots for my
garments. Then, Lord, do not stand at a distance, if
20 thou wouldst aid me; look to my defence. Only life is
left me; save that from the sword, from the power of
22 these dogs; rescue me from the very mouth of the lion,
the very horns of the wild oxen that have brought me
thus low.
- 23 Then I will proclaim thy renown to my brethren;
where thy people gather, I will join in singing thy
24 praise, Praise the Lord, all you that are his worship-
pers; honour to him from the sons of Jacob, reverence

v. 16. "My throat"; Vg. "my strength."

- 25 to him from Israel's race! He has not scorned or
slighted the appeal of the afflicted, nor turned his face
away from me; my cry for help did not go unheeded.
26 Take what I owe thee, my song of praise before a
great assembly. I will pay my vows to the Lord in
27 the sight of his worshippers; the poor shall eat now,
and have their fill, those who look for the Lord will cry
out in praise of him, Refreshed be your hearts eter-
28 nally! The furthest dwellers on earth will bethink
themselves of the Lord, and come back to him; all the
29 races of the heathen will worship before him; to the
Lord royalty belongs, the whole world's homage is
30 his due. Him shall they worship, him only, that are
laid to rest in the earth, even from their dust they shall
31 adore. I, too, shall live on in his presence, and beget
children to serve him; these to a later age shall speak
32 of the Lord's name; these to a race that must yet be
born shall tell the story of his faithfulness, Hear what
the Lord did.

v. 30. The text here is quite uncertain; the Vulgate has "the great ones of the earth feast in his presence, and adore; men brought low, even to the dust, bow down at his feet."

vv. 31, 32. *Vg.* "I, too, shall live on in his presence, and beget children to serve him; the Lord will claim for his own a generation still to come; heaven itself will make known his faithfulness to a people yet to be born, a people of the Lord's own founding."

PSALM 22

(A psalm of David.)

- THE LORD is my shepherd; how can I lack anything?
2 He gives me a resting-place where there is green
3 pasture, leads me out by cool waters, and revives my
drooping spirits. By sure paths he leads me, as in
4 honour pledged, and though I should walk with the
shadow of death all around me, I will not be afraid
5 of any harm; thy rod, thy crook are my comfort. En-
vious my foes watch, while thou dost spread a banquet
for me; richly thou dost anoint my head with oil,
6 generous the cup that steals away my senses! All
my life thy loving favour pursues me; through the
long years, the Lord's house shall be my dwelling-
place.

PSALM 23

(Of David. A psalm.)

- THE LORD owns earth, and all earth's fulness, the
2 round world, and all its inhabitants. Who else has
built it out from the sea, poised it on the hidden
streams?
3 Who dares climb the mountain of the Lord, and

4 appear in his sanctuary? The guiltless in act, the pure
 in heart; one who never set his heart on lying tales,
 5 or swore treacherously to his neighbour. His to receive
 a blessing from the Lord, mercy from God, his sure
 6 defender; his the true breed that still looks, still longs
 for the presence of the God of Jacob.

7 Swing back, doors, higher yet; reach higher, im-
 8 memorial gates, to let the King enter in triumph! Who
 is this great King? Who but the Lord, mighty and
 9 strong, the Lord mighty in battle? Swing back, doors,
 higher yet; reach higher, immemorial gates, to let the
 10 King enter in triumph! Who is this great King? It
 is the Lord of Armies that comes here on his way tri-
 umphant.

v. 4. "Set his heart on lying tales"; that is, probably, on false religion. Some Hebrew authorities read "lifted up his soul to falsehood," in reference to Ex. 20:7. The Vulgate has "played fast and loose with his soul."

vv. 7, 9. For "Swing back, doors, higher yet" the Vulgate has, "Lift the gates higher, captains of the guard."

PSALM 24

(Of David.)

2 **A**LL MY HEART goes out to thee, O Lord my God
 Belie not the trust I have in thee, let not my
 3 enemies boast of my downfall. Can any that trust in
 thee be disappointed, as they are disappointed who

4 lightly break their troth? Direct my way, Lord, as
5 thou wilt, teach me thy own paths. Ever let thy truth
6 guide and teach me, O God my deliverer, my ever-
7 lasting hope. Forget not, Lord, thy pity, thy mercies
8 of long ago. Give heed no more to the sins and frailties
9 of my youth, but think mercifully of me, as thou art
10 ever gracious. How gracious is the Lord, how faithful,
11 beacon-light of sinful souls! In his own laws he will
train the humble, in his paths the humble he will
guide. Jealous be thy keeping of covenant and ordi-
nance, and the Lord's dealings will be ever gracious,
ever faithful with thee. Kindly be thy judgement of
my sin, my grievous sin, Lord, for the honour of thy
name.

12 Let a man but fear the Lord, and he will be taught
13 the right path. Much content shall be his while he
dwells on earth, and he will have children to be heirs
14 of his land. No man ever feared the Lord, but found
graciousness in him, and revelation in his covenant.
15 On the Lord I fix my eyes continually, trusting him to
16 save my feet from the snare. Pity me, Lord, as thou
17 seest me so unbefriended, so greatly afflicted. Relieve
my heart of its burden, deliver me from my distress.
18,19 Sinful, I cry for thy pardon, who seest my grievous
affliction, seest how many are my foes, and how bitter
20 is the grudge they bear me. Take my soul into thy
keeping; come to my rescue, do not let me be dis-
21 appointed of my trust in thee. Uprightness and purity
22 be my shield, as I wait patiently for thy help. When
wilt thou deliver Israel, my God, from all his troubles?

PSALM 25

(Of David.)

LORD, be thou my judge; have I not guided my steps
2 clear of wrong? Have I not given the Lord un-
3 wavering confidence? Test me, Lord, put me to the
4 proof; assay my inmost desires and thoughts. Always
5 thy mercy dwells in my view, thy faithfulness is
6 ever at my side. I have not consorted with false men,
7 or joined in plotting evil; I have shunned the company
8 of the wicked, never sat closeted with sinners. With
9 the pure in heart I will wash my hands clean, and take
10 my place among them at thy altar, listening there to
11 the sound of thy praises, telling the story of all thy
12 wonderful deeds. How well, Lord, I love thy house
in its beauty, the place where thy own glory dwells!
Lord, never count this soul for lost with the wicked,
this life among the bloodthirsty; hands ever stained
with guilt, palms ever itching for a bribe! Be it mine
to guide my steps clear of wrong; deliver me in thy
mercy. My feet are set on firm ground; where his
people gather I will join in blessing the Lord's name.

PSALM 26

(Of David.)

- THE LORD is my light and my deliverance; whom
I have I to fear? The Lord watches over my life;
2 whom shall I hold in dread? Vainly the malicious
close about me, as if they would tear me in pieces,
vainly my enemies threaten my peace; all at once they
3 stumble and fall. Though a whole host were arrayed
against me, my heart would be undaunted; though an
armed onset should threaten me, still I would not lose
4 my confidence. One request I have ever made of the
Lord, let me claim it still, to dwell in the Lord's house
my whole life long, gazing at the beauty of the Lord,
5 contemplating his sanctuary. In his royal tent he hides
me, in the inmost recess of his royal tent, safe from
6 peril. On a rock fastness he lifts me high up; my head
rises high above the enemies that encompass me. I will
join with the throng, and make an offering of tri-
umphant music in this tabernacle of his, singing and
praising the Lord.
- 7 Listen to my voice, Lord, when I cry to thee; hear
8 and spare. True to my heart's promise, I have eyes
9 only for thee; I long, Lord, for thy presence. Do not
hide thy face, do not turn away from thy servant in
anger, but give me still thy aid; do not forsake me, do

v. 8. "True to my heart's promise, I have eyes only for thee"; literally, "My heart says, My face seeks thee." The Hebrew text has, "My heart says, Seek (ye) my face."

10 not neglect me, O God, my defender. Father and
mother may neglect me, but the Lord takes me into his
11 care. Lord, shew me the way thou hast chosen for
me, guide me into the right path, beset as I am with
12 enemies; do not give me over to the will of my op-
pressors, when false witnesses stand up to accuse me,
13 breathe out threats against me. My faith is, I will yet
14 live to see the Lord's mercies. Wait patiently for the
Lord to help thee; be brave, and let thy heart take
comfort; wait patiently for the Lord.

PSALM 27

(Of David.)

TO THEE, Lord, my refuge, I cry aloud, do not
leave my cry unanswered; speak to me, or I am
2 no better than a dead man, sinking to the grave. Lis-
ten, Lord, to my plea as I call upon thee, as I raise
3 my hands in prayer towards thy holy temple. Do not
summon me, with the wicked, before thy judgement-
seat; with men who traffic in iniquity, men who talk
of peace to their neighbours, while their hearts are full
4 of malice. For them, the reward of their own acts,
their own evil ways; an evil end for the evil-doers, no
5 pity for the pitiless. Of the Lord's acts, the Lord's

v. 12. "Breathe out threats against me"; Vg. "with malice self-betrayed."

ways, they took no heed; may he root them out, and never grant their line continuance.

- 6 Blessed be the Lord's name, my plea is heard;
7 the Lord is my strength and shield. Trusting in him,
I found redress; there is triumph in my heart, praise is
8 the theme of my song. The Lord defends his own
9 people, protects the king he has anointed. Lord, save
thy people, bless thy own chosen race; be their shepherd,
evermore in thy arms upholding them.

PSALM 28

(A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 **S**ONS OF GOD, make your offering to the Lord; an
offering to the Lord of honour and glory, an offering
3 to the Lord of the glory that befits his name; worship
the Lord, in holy vesture habited. The voice of the
Lord is heard over the waters, when the glorious God
thunders, the Lord, thundering over swollen waters;
4 the Lord's voice in its power, the Lord's voice in its
5 majesty. The Lord's voice, that breaks the cedars;
6 the Lord breaks the cedars on Libanus; bids Libanus
and Sarion leap high as a bullock leaps, breed of the

v. 1. The Hebrew text omits, after the first nine words, the phrase, "an offering to the Lord of yearling rams," which is in the Septuagint Greek, and in the Vulgate. It is perhaps due to an accidental repetition.

v. 2. "In holy vesture habited"; Vg. "in his holy precincts."

v. 6. The Latin here reads, literally, "and he will throw

7,8 wild ox. The Lord's voice kindles flashing fire; the
Lord's voice makes the wilderness rock; the Lord,
9 rocking the wilderness of Cades. The Lord's voice sets
the oak-trees a-swaying, strips the deep forest bare.
Meanwhile, in his sanctuary, there is no sound but tells
10 of his glory. Out of a raging flood, the Lord makes a
dwelling-place; the Lord sits enthroned as king for
11 ever. And this Lord will give strength to his people;
the Lord will give his people his own blessing of peace.

PSALM 29

(A psalm. A hymn for the feast of the temple's
dedication. Of David.)

2 **P**RAISE to thee, Lord, thou hast taken me under thy
protection, and baulked my enemies of their will;
3 I cried out, claiming thee for my God, and thou didst
4 grant me recovery. So didst thou bring me back from
the place of shadows, rescue me from the very edge of
5 the grave. Sing praise to the Lord, then, faithful souls,
6 invoke his name with thankfulness. For a moment

them down like a calf of Libanus, the Beloved One (acting)
like the young of unicorns." "The beloved one" is a title
elsewhere given to God's people, but nowhere to himself; its
sense in Hebrew is rather, "the upright one." It seems clear
that the Septuagint, and the Latin in translating it, have mis-
taken one of the Hebrew words.

v. 6. Vg. "What if his vengeance falls swift when he is
angry? With his favour life returns; sorrow" . . . etc.

lasts his anger, for a lifetime his love; sorrow is but the guest of a night, and joy comes in the morning.

7 I, too, had thought, in time of ease, Nothing can
8 shake me now; such power and state, Lord, had thy
mercy granted me. Then thou didst turn thy face
9 away from me, and I was at peace no more. Lord,
I was fain to plead with thee, cry upon my God for
10 pity; How will it profit thee to take my life? I can
but go down into the grave; and will this dust give
thanks to thee, or acknowledge, there, thy faithfulness?
11 Listen, Lord, and spare; Lord, let thy aid befriend
12 me. With that, thou didst turn my sadness into re-
joicing; thou hast undone the sackcloth I wore, and
13 girded me about with gladness. So may this heart
never tire of singing praises; O Lord my God, I will
give thanks to thee for ever.

PSALM 30

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

2 **T**O THEE, O Lord, I look for refuge, never let me
be ashamed of my trust; in thy faithful care, de-
3 liver me. Grant me audience, and make haste to rescue
me; my hill-fastness, my stronghold of defence, to save
4 me from peril. Thou dost strengthen and defend me;
thou, for thy own honour, dost guide and escort me;
5 by thee protected, I shall escape from the snare that
6 lies hidden in my path. Into thy hands I commend

my spirit; thou, God ever faithful, hast redeemed me
7 for thyself. Let fools provoke thee by the worship of
8 false gods; for me, no refuge but the Lord. I will
triumph and exult in thy mercy; it was thou didst pity
my weakness, and save me when I was hard bested;
9 before the enemy's toils could close around me, the
open plain lay at my feet.

10 And now, Lord, have compassion on my distress,
vexation has dimmed my eyes, frets me away, soul
11 and body. My life is all grief, my years are but sighs;
for very misery, my strength ebbs away, my frame is
12 wasted. Openly my foes deride me; even to my neigh-
bours I am a thing of utter scorn; my friends are
13 adread, and the passer-by shuns my contact; I am lost
to memory, like a dead man, discarded like a broken
14 pitcher. On every side their busy whispering comes
to my ears, to daunt me, the men who conspire against
15 me, plot against my life. And still, Lord, my trust
in thee is not shaken; still I cry, Thou art my God,
16 my fate is in thy hand; save me from the enemy's
17 power, save me from my pursuers! Smile on thy
18 servant once more, and deliver me in thy mercy; Lord,
do not let me plead in vain. Disappoint the wicked
of their hopes, hurl them down thwarted into the
19 abyss; let silence fall on those treacherous lips, that
spoke maliciously of the innocent, in the days of their
pride and scorn!

v. 11. "For very misery"; in the Hebrew text, "through my sin."

20 What treasure of loving-kindness, Lord, dost thou
store up for the men who fear thee, rewarding their
21 confidence for all the world to see! Thy presence is a
sanctuary, to hide them away from the world's malice;
22 thy tabernacle a refuge from its noisy debate. Blessed
be the Lord; so wondrous is his mercy, so strong the
23 wall of his protection. I thought, bewildered, that thy
watchful care had lost sight of me; but I cried out to
24 thee, and thereupon thou didst listen to my plea. Love
the Lord well, you who worship him; the Lord keeps
faith with his servants, and repays the actions of the
25 proud above measure. Play the man, and keep high
your courage, all you that wait patiently for the Lord.

PSALM 31

(Of David. A Maskil.)

2 **B**LESSED are they who have their faults forgiven, their
transgressions buried deep; blessed is the man who
is not guilty in the Lord's reckoning, the heart that
3 hides no treason. While I kept my own secret, I cried
to thee evermore in vain; still my frame pined away,
4 bowed down, day and night, by thy chastisement; still
my strength ebbed, as though I were parched by sum-
5 mer heat. At last I made my transgression known to

v. 4. In the second half of this verse, the Vulgate has,
"Still I tossed about in pain, so deep did the thorn rankle."

- thee, and hid my sin no longer; I will be my own
 accuser, I said, and confess my fault to the Lord; and
 6 with that, thou didst remit the guilt of my sin. Let
 every devout soul, then, turn to thee in prayer when
 hard times befall; rise the floods never so high, they
 7 shall have no power to reach it. Thou art my hiding-
 place, when I am sore bestead; friends shall flock to
 my side, rejoicing at my deliverance.
- 8 Friend, let me counsel thee, trace for thee the path
 thy feet should tread; let my prudence watch over
 9 thee. Do not be like the horse and the mule, senseless
 creatures which will not come near thee unless their
 10 spirit is tamed first by bit and bridle. Again and again
 the sinner must feel the lash; he who trusts in the
 11 Lord finds nothing but mercy all around him. Just
 souls, be glad, and rejoice in the Lord; true hearts,
 make your boast in him.

P S A L M 32

- 2 **T**R I U M P H, just souls, in the Lord; true hearts, it is
 yours to praise him. Give thanks to the Lord with
 the music of the viol, praise him with a harp of ten

v. 6. Vg. "Let every devout soul, then, turn to thee in prayer while it has time to reach thee; none will find access, when the waters are running deep in flood."

v. 9. Some understand the Hebrew text here as meaning that the horse or mule will turn on its rider unless it is bridled.

3 strings. For him let a new song be sung; give him
4 of your best, sound the harp, sing lustily. The Lord's
5 word is true, he is faithful in all his dealings; mercy
he loves, and the just award, the whole earth overflows
6 with the Lord's goodness. It was the Lord's word that
made the heavens, the breath of his lips that peopled
7 them; he it is who stores up the waters of the sea as
8 in a cistern, and makes a cellar of its deep caverns. Let
the whole earth hold the Lord in dread, let all the
9 inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him; he
spoke, and they were made, he gave his command, and
10 their frame was fashioned. At the Lord's bidding, a
nation's purposes come to nothing, a people's designs
11 are thwarted; his own designs stand firm for ever;
generation after generation, his will does not swerve.
12 Blessed the nation that calls the Lord its own God,
13 the people he has chosen out to be his! Looking down
14 from heaven, he watches all mankind, his dwelling-
15 place has the whole world in view; he has fashioned
each man's nature, and weighs the actions of each.
16 There is no protection for kings in thronging armies,
17 for warriors in abundant prowess; nor shall horses
bring thee the mastery, brute strength that cannot save.
18 It is the Lord, watching over those who fear him and
19 trust in his mercy, that will protect their lives, will
20 feed them in time of famine. Patiently we wait for the
21 Lord's help; he is our strength and our shield; in him

v. 10. At the end of this verse the Vulgate adds, "Kings are baulked of their will."

- our hearts find contentment, in his holy name we trust.
22 Lord, let thy mercy rest upon us, who put all our confidence in thee.

PSALM 33

(Of David, when he feigned madness at the court of Abimelech, so that Abimelech sent him away, and he escaped.)

- 2 **A**T ALL times I will bless the Lord; his praise shall
3 be on my lips continually. Be all my boasting
in the Lord; listen to me, humble souls, and rejoice.
4 Come, sing the Lord's praise with me, let us extol his
5 name together. Did I not look to the Lord, and find
a hearing; did he not deliver me from all my terrors?
6 Enter his presence, and there find happiness; here is
7 no room for downcast looks. Friendless folk may still
call on the Lord and gain his ear, and be rescued from
8 all their afflictions. Guardian of those who fear the
Lord, his angel encamps at their side, and brings de-
9 liverance. How gracious the Lord is! Taste and prove
it; blessed is the man that learns to trust in him.
10 It is for you, his chosen servants, to fear the Lord;

v. 1. See I Kings 21:10 and following. The Vulgate here gives Achimelech instead of Abimelech; in the Book of Kings, he is called Achis.

- 11 those who fear him never go wanting. Justly do the
proud fall into hunger and want, while those who
search for the Lord are denied none of his blessings.
- 12 Know, then, my children, what the fear of the Lord
13 is; come and listen to my teaching. Long life, and
prosperous days, who would have these for the ask-
14 ing? My counsel is, keep thy tongue clear of harm,
15 and thy lips free from every treacherous word. Neglect
the call of evil, and rather do good; let peace be all
16 thy quest and aim. On the upright the Lord's eye
ever looks favourably; his ears are open to their plead-
17 ing. Perilous is his frown for the wrong-doers; he
will soon make their name disappear from the earth.
- 18 Roused by the cry of the innocent, the Lord sets them
19 free from all their afflictions. So near is he to patient
20 hearts, so ready to defend the humbled spirit. Though
a hundred trials beset the innocent, the Lord will bring
21 him safely through them all. Under the Lord's keep-
ing, every bone of his is safe; not one of them shall
22 suffer harm. Villains will come to an evil end; the
enemies of innocence will bear their punishment.
- 23 The Lord will claim his servants as his own; they
go unreprieved that put their trust in him.

v. 11. For "the proud," the Hebrew text has "the young lions."

PSALM 34

(Of David.)

- 2 **L**ORD, espouse my quarrel; disarm the enemies who
3 rise in arms against me; grip target and shield,
4 bestir thyself in my defence. With poised lance, bar
5 the way against my pursuers; whisper in my heart, I
6 am here to save thee. Shame and confound those who
7 would take my life, defeat and disgrace the men who
8 wish me harm; chaff before the wind, with the angel
9 of the Lord to scatter them, benighted and bemired
10 on their way, with the angel of the Lord in pursuit!
11 Wantonly they have spread their nets for me, wan-
12 tonly they have dug the snare; now let sudden doom
13 overtake them, their own nets enmesh, their own snare
entrap them! Mine to triumph in the Lord, to boast
of the aid he brings me; this be the cry of my whole
being, There is none like thee, Lord; who else rescues
the afflicted from the hand of tyranny, the poor, the
destitute, from his oppressors?
- 11 See how false witnesses have come forward, to brow-
12 beat me over charges of which I know nothing; how
they have repaid my kindness with cruelty, and left me
13 friendless! Time was, when these were sick; what did

v. 7. "Dug the snare"; Vg. "laughed at my misfortune."

v. 13. Vg. "What did I do, when they began to trouble me thus? I went clad in sackcloth, and kept rigorous fast; and all my prayer hid itself in my own bosom." The sense of this last phrase may be that it made no impression on his enemies (cf. Matt. 10:13), or merely that he bowed himself double in the intensity of his prayer (cf. III Kings 18:42).

I then? Sackcloth was my wear; rigorously I kept fast,
14 prayed from my heart's depths. I went my way sadly,
as one that mourns for brother or friend, bowed with
15 grief, as one that bewails a mother's loss. And now it
was my turn to reel under fortune's blows; what did
they? Gleeful they met, and plotted to attack me
16 unawares; tore at me without ceasing, baited and
17 mocked me, gnashing their teeth in hatred. Lord, wilt
thou look on unheeding still? Wilt thou leave my
18 life at the mercy of these roaring lions? Let me live
to praise and thank thee before the multitude that
19 throngs thy courts. No more the leer of triumph in the
eye of yonder treacherous foe, that wantonly assails me!
20 In all their whispering, never a word of peace; they
21 will still be plotting against the land's repose. See how
they mop and mow at me, crying out, Joy, joy that we
22 should have lived to see this! Thou too, Lord, hast
seen it, do not pass it by in silence; Lord, do not
23 abandon me. Bestir thyself and take my part, give me
24 speedy redress, my Lord and my God. As thou art

vv. 14-17. Vg. "I went on my way peaceably, treating them as friends and brothers; I humbled myself, as a mourner humbles himself for grief. Now they met to triumph over my misfortune, when punishments crowded in upon me, that was innocent. Now they would scatter, but still gave me no respite, baiting me, heaping mockery on mockery, gnashing their teeth at me. Lord, wilt thou never have eyes to see it? Rescue me at last from their cruelty. Nothing is left me but life, rescue that from the lions."

v. 20. "Time was when they talked to me peaceably enough, yet all the while they were plotting, and their talk bred quarrels in the land."

just, O Lord my God, give thy award for me, and do
25 not let them triumph over me; do not let them think,
All goes well, and boast that they have made a prey
26 of me. Disappoint them, fill them with confusion, the
men who delight in my misfortune; cover them with
shame and self-reproach, the enemies that triumph over
27 me. Joy and gladness be theirs, who applaud my innocence;
Praise to the Lord! be their cry, who wish well
28 to his servant. And all day long, thy justice its theme,
this tongue shall make known thy praise.

PSALM 35

(To the choir-master. Of David, the Lord's servant.)

2 **D**EEP IN HIS heart the sinner hears the whispering
3 of evil, and loses sight of the fear of God; flatters
himself with the thought that his wickedness goes un-
4 marked, earns no reproof. No word on his lips but is
cruel and false; never a noble thought, a kindly deed.
5 He lies awake plotting mischief, and lends himself to
every evil course, never weary of wrong-doing.
6 Lord, thy mercy is high as heaven; thy faithfulness

vv. 2, 3. The Hebrew text here is obscure, and probably corrupt. The Vulgate has, "The sinner thinks to keep his evil ways secret, forgetting that he has God to fear; plans treacherously under that watchful eye, till at last his sin comes to light in all its hatefulness."

7 reaches to the clouds; thy justice stands firm as the
everlasting hills, the wisdom of thy decrees is deep as
8 the abyss. Lord, thou dost give protection to man and
beast, so rich is thy Divine mercy; under the shelter of
those wings the frail children of earth will find con-
9 fidence. Their senses will be ravished with the treas-
ures of thy house; thou wilt bid them drink deep at
10 thy fountain of contentment. In thee is the source
of all life; thy brightness will break on our eyes like
11 dawn. Still let thy mercy dwell with those who ac-
12 knowledge thee, thy favour with upright hearts; do
not suffer the proud to trample on me, the wicked to
13 dispossess me. See what a fall awaits the wrong-doers,
how they are cast down to earth, and can keep their
feet no more!

PSALM 36

(Of David.)

2 **A**RT THOU impatient, friend, when the wicked thrive;
dost thou envy the lot of evil-doers? they will soon
3 fade like the grass, like the green leaf wither away. Be
content to trust in the Lord and do good; live on thy
4 land, with its riches to sustain thee, all thy longing
fixed in the Lord; so he will give thee what thy heart

v. 7. "The everlasting hills"; literally, "the hills of God,"
a Hebrew form of speech for what is magnificent in Nature.

5 desires. Commit thy life to the Lord, and trust in him;
6 he will prosper thee, making thy honesty clear as the
day, the justice of thy cause bright as the sun at noon.
7 Defer to the Lord's will, and pray to him, never fret-
ting over the man that has his own way, and thrives
8 by villainy. End thy complaints, forgo displeasure, do
9 not fret thyself into an evil mood; the evil-minded will
be dispossessed, and patient souls, that wait for the
10 Lord, succeed them. Forbear yet a little, and the sin-
ner will be seen no more; thou wilt search in vain to
11 find him, while patient souls are the land's heirs,
enjoying great peace.

12 Gnashing his teeth with envy, the wrong-doer lies
13 in wait for the innocent, and cannot see his own turn
coming; but the Lord sees it, and laughs at his malice.
14 How they draw the sword, how they bend the bow,
these sinners, to bring ruin on helpless poverty, to
15 murder the upright; swords that will pierce their own
16 hearts, bows that will break in pieces! Innocence, ill
endowed, has the better of the wicked in their abun-
17 dance; soon fails the strength of their arms, and still
18 the Lord has the just in his keeping. Jealously the
Lord watches over the lives of the guiltless; they will
19 hold their lands for ever, undismayed by adversity, in
20 time of famine well content. Knavery will yet come
to an end; like the spring's finery they will die, the
21 Lord's enemies, vanish away like smoke. Let the sin-

v. 20. "Like the spring's finery they will die, the Lord's enemies"; Vg. "Proud and powerful the Lord's enemies may be."

ner borrow, and never repay, still the good man will be
22 a generous giver; win the Lord's blessing, and the land
23 is thine; his ban is death. Man's feet stand firm, if the
24 Lord is with him to prosper his journey; he may stumble, but never fall, with the Lord's hand to uphold him.
25 Now youth is past, and I have grown old; yet never did
I see the good man forsaken, or his children begging
26 their bread; still he lends without stint, and men call
27 down blessings on his posterity. Offend no more,
28 rather do good, and be at rest continually; the Lord
is ever just, and will not abandon his faithful servants.
Perish the sinner, forgotten be the name of the evil-
29 doer, but these will hold their land, and live on it
always at rest.

30 Right reason is on the good man's lips, well weighed
31 are all his counsels; his steps never falter, because the
32 law of God rules in his heart. Sinners lie in wait,
33 plotting against the life of the innocent; but the Lord
will never leave him in their power, never find him
34 guilty when he is arraigned. Trust the Lord, and follow
the path he has chosen; so he will set thee up in
possession of thy land, and thou wilt live to see the
35 wicked come to ruin. Until yesterday, I saw the evil-
36 doer throned high as the branching cedars; then, when
I passed by, he was there no longer, and I looked in
37 vain to find him. Virtuous men and innocent mark
thou well; he that lives peaceably will leave a race
38 behind him, while sinners are rooted out every one,
39 and their graceless names forgotten. When affliction
comes, the Lord is the refuge and defence of the inno-

40 cent; the Lord will aid and deliver them, rescue and preserve them from the power of wickedness, because they put their trust in him.

PSALM 37

(A psalm. Of David. For a memorial.)

2 **T**HY REPROOF, Lord, not thy vengeance; thy chastise-
3 ment, not thy condemnation! Thy arrows pierce
4 me, thy hand presses me hard; thy anger has driven
away all health from my body, and my bones are
5 denied rest, so grievous are my sins. My own wrong-
doing towers high above me, hangs on me like a heavy
6 burden; my wounds fester and rankle, with my own
7 folly to blame. Beaten down, bowed to the earth, I go
8 mourning all day long, my whole frame afire, my
9 whole body diseased; so spent, so crushed, I groan
10 aloud in the weariness of my heart. Thou, Lord,
knowest all my longing, no complaint of mine escapes
11 thee; restless my heart, gone my strength; the very
light that shone in my eyes is mine no longer.

12 Friends and neighbours that meet me keep their dis-
tance from a doomed man; old companions shun me.
13 Ill-wishers that grudge me life itself lay snares about
me, threaten me with ruin; relentlessly their malice
14 plots against me. And I, all the while, am deaf to their

v. 7. "Afire"; Vg. "cruelly buffeted."

15 threats, dumb before my accusers; mine the unheed-
 16 ing ear, and the tongue that utters no defence. On thee,
 Lord, my hopes are set; thou, O Lord my God, wilt
 17 listen to me. Such is the prayer I make, Do not let
 my enemies triumph over me, boast of my downfall.
 18,19 Fall full well I may; misery clouds my view; I am
 ever ready to publish my guilt, ever anxious over my
 20 sin. And still they live, these wilful enemies of mine
 have the mastery; so many that bear me a grudge so
 21 wantonly, rewarding good with evil, and for the very
 22 rightness of my cause assailing me. Do not fail me,
 23 O Lord my God, do not forsake me; hasten to my
 defence, Lord God, my only refuge.

PSALM 38

(To the choir-master, Idithun. A psalm. Of David.)

2 **I**T WAS my resolve to live watchfully, and never use
 my tongue amiss; still, while I was in the presence
 3 of sinners, I kept my mouth gagged, dumb and patient,
 impotent for good. But indignation came back, and
 4 my heart burned within me, the fire kindled by my
 thoughts, so that at last I kept silence no longer.
 5 Lord, warn me of my end, and how few my days

v. 18. "Fall full well I may"; *Vg.* "I bow before the lash."

v. 5. It is not clear what is the connexion between the two parts of this psalm.

6 are; teach me to know my own insufficiency. See how
thou hast measured my years with a span, how my life
is nothing in thy reckoning! Nay, what is any man
7 living but a breath that passes? Truly man walks the
world like a shadow; with what vain anxiety he hoards
up riches, when he cannot tell who will have the count-
8 ing of them! What hope then is mine, Lord? All
9 that I am is from thee. Clear me of that manifold guilt
10 which makes me the laughing-stock of fools, tongue-
tied and uncomplaining, because I know that my trou-
11 bles come from thee; spare me this punishment; I
12 faint under thy powerful hand. When thou dost
chasten man to punish his sins, gone is all he loved,
as if the moth had fretted it away; a breath that passes,
13 and no more. Listen, Lord, to my prayer, let my cry
reach thy hearing, and my tears win answer. What
am I in thy sight but a passer-by, a wanderer, as all
14 my fathers were? Thy frown relax, give me some
breath of comfort, before I go away and am known
no more.

v. 12. "As if the moth had fretted it away"; Vg. "like
gossamer."

PSALM 39

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.)

- 2 **P**ATIENTLY I waited for the Lord's help, and at last
3 he turned his look towards me; he listened to my
plea, drew me up out of a deadly pit, where the mire
had settled deep, and gave me a foothold on the rock,
4 with firm ground to tread. He has framed a new
music on my lips, a song of praise to our God, to fill
all that stand by with reverence, and with trust in the
5 Lord. Happy is the man whose trust is there be-
stowed, who shuns the lure of strange gods and lying
6 dreams. O Lord my God, how long is the story of
thy marvellous deeds! Was ever care like thine? How
should I tell the tale of those mercies, past all number-
7 ing? No sacrifice, no offering was thy demand;
enough that thou hast given me an ear ready to listen.
Thou hast not found any pleasure in burnt sacrifices,
8 in sacrifices for sin. See then, I said, I am coming to

v. 5. The Hebrew text has "the proud" instead of "the idolaters."

vv. 7-8. Heb. 10:5.

v. 7. "Thou hast given me an ear ready to listen"; literally, "opened my ears"; in the Vulgate, "perfected ears for me." But the Septuagint Greek has, "thou hast fitted a body for me," and this is the form in which the Epistle to the Hebrews (10:5) quotes the passage.

v. 8. "Where the book lies unrolled"; literally, "in the volume of the book." This is often identified as the book of the Law; but the context suggests rather a metaphorical reference to David's own destiny (cf. Ex. 32:32; I Kings 13:14).

fulfil what is written of me, where the book lies
9 unrolled; to do thy will, O my God, is all my desire,
to carry out that law of thine which is written in my
10 heart. And I told the story of thy just dealings before
a great throng; be witness, Lord, that I do not seal
11 my lips. Thy just dealings are no secret hidden away
in my heart; I boast of thy faithful protection, proclaim
that mercy, that faithfulness of thine for all to hear it.
12 Lord, do not withhold thy pity from me; thy mercy
13 and faithfulness that have ever been my shield. I am
beset with evils past numbering, overtaken by my sins;
they fill my prospect, countless as the hairs on my
14 head; my courage fails me. Deign, Lord, to set me
15 free; Lord, give heed and help. Disappointment and
shame be theirs, who lay plots against my life; may
they slink away covered with confusion, who now re-
16 joice over my downfall. Joy, joy! is their cry; let them
17 stand dumb with bewilderment. Rejoicing and tri-
umph for all the souls that look to thee; Praise to the
Lord, will ever be their song, who now long for thy
18 aid. I, so helpless, so destitute, and the Lord is con-
cerned for me! Thou art my champion and my refuge;
do not linger, my God, do not linger on the way.

PSALM 40

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 **B**LESSED is that man who takes thought for the poor
and the destitute; the Lord will keep him safe in
3 time of trouble. The Lord will watch over him, and
give him long life and happiness on earth, and baulk
4 his enemies of their will. The Lord will sustain him
when he lies bed-ridden, turn all to health in his
sickness.
- 5 Lord have mercy on me, is my prayer; bring healing
6 to a soul that has sinned against thee. Bitterly my en-
emies taunt me; How long, they ask, ere he will die,
7 and his name be forgotten? When one comes to visit
me, he comes with smooth words, his heart full of
8 malice; ready to go out and plot against me in secret.
There they stand, my enemies, talking of me in whis-
9 pers, devising hurt; Here is a foul plague loosed on
10 him; he will leave his bed no more. Why, the very
man I trusted most, my own intimate friend, who
shared my bread, has lifted his heel to trip me up.
- 11 Lord, have mercy on me; give me back life, and let
12 me requite them! Proof of thy love, my enemies are

v. 4. The Hebrew text, perhaps corrupt, reads, literally, "Thou wilt alter all his lying down in his sickness."

v. 9. Vg. "Pitiless is their resolve; He sleeps now, but what is to prevent his waking?" evidently with the suggestion of ensuring the Psalmist's death by murder.

v. 10. John 13:18.

- 13 baulked of their triumph; thou dost befriend my inno-
14 cence, assure me of thy unceasing favour. Blessed be
the Lord God of Israel, from the beginning to the end
of time, Amen, Amen.

PSALM 41

(To the choir-master. A maskil. Of the sons of
Core.)

- 2 **O** God, my whole soul longs for thee, as a deer for
3 running water; my whole soul thirsts for God,
the living God; shall I never again make my pilgrim-
4 mage into God's presence? Morning and evening, my
diet still of tears! Daily I must listen to the taunt,
5 Where is thy God now? Memories come back to me
yet, melting the heart; how once I would join with
the throng, leading the way to God's house, amid cries
of joy and thanksgiving, and all the noise of holiday.
6 Soul, art thou still downcast? Wilt thou never be at
peace? Wait for God's help; I will not cease to cry
out in thankfulness, My champion and my God.
7 In my sad mood I will think of thee, here in this

v. 5. Vg. "Memories come to me yet, melting the heart;
I am back at God's house, his majestic tabernacle."

v. 7. The psalm seems to have been written by an exile
from Jerusalem, living to the east of Jordan, at its northern
end, on the foot-hills of the Hermon range. "Misar mountain"
Vg. "stunted hills," perhaps by way of contrasting them with
Mount Sion.

land of Jordan and Hermon, here on Misar mountain.
8 One depth makes answer to another amid the roar of
the floods thou sendest; wave after wave, crest after
9 crest overwhelms me. Would he but lighten the day
with his mercy, what praise would I sing at evening
10 to the God who is life for me! Thou art my strong-
hold, I cry out to him still; hast thou never a thought
for me? Must I go mourning, with enemies pressing
11 me hard; racked by the ceaseless taunts of my persecu-
12 tors, Where is thy God now? Soul, why art thou
downcast, why art thou all lament? Wait for God's
help; I will not cease to cry out in thankfulness, My
champion and my God.

P S A L M 42

O God, sustain my cause; give me redress against
a race that knows no piety; save me from a
2 treacherous foe and cruel. Thou, O God, art all my
strength; why hast thou cast me off? Must I go mourn-
3 ing, with enemies pressing me hard? The light of thy
presence, the fulfilment of thy promise, let these be

v. 8. "One depth"; these depths are ordinarily understood as being waterfalls; they suggest, however, to the Psalmist the idea of storms at sea. Cf. Jonas 2:4.

v. 9. Vg. "Such mercy the Lord has shewn me while day lasted, and have I no song for him, here in the night, no prayer to the God who is life for me?"; as if "day-time" was used by a metaphor for the writer's former prosperity, and "night" for his present unhappy condition.

my escort, bringing me safe to thy holy mountain, to
4 the tabernacle where thou dwellest. There I will go
up to the altar of God, the giver of triumphant happi-
ness; thou art my own God, with the harp I hymn thy
5 praise. Soul, art thou still downcast, wilt thou never
be at peace? Wait for God's help; I will not cease to
cry out in thankfulness, My champion and my God.

PSALM 43

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core. A
maskil.)

2 **O** God, the tale has come to our ears—have not our
fathers told it?—of the great things thou didst
3 in their time, in days long ago; it was thy power that
gave them a home by rooting out the heathen, crushing
4 and dispossessing nations to make room for them. It
was not by their own sword that our fathers won the
land, it was not their own strength that brought them
victory; it was the work of thy hand, thy strength;
5 thy smile shone upon them, in proof of thy favour. I
too have no King, no God, save thee; it is thou that
6 sendest deliverance to Jacob. Through thee we rout
our enemies; under thy protection we repel all who

v. 4. "Triumphant happiness"; Vg "youth and happiness."

v. 5. The repetition, here, of the refrain used in Psalm 41
makes it probable that these two were originally a single
psalm.

- 7 take arms against us. Not in my bow I trust, not to
8 my sword I look for safety; it is thou that savest us
from our enemies, and coverest their malice with con-
9 fusion. In God was ever our boast; his name we praise
eternally.
- 10 And now? Now, O God, thou hast disowned us,
and put us to shame, by refusing to go into battle with
11 our armies. Thou dost put us to flight before our
12 enemies; our ill-wishers plunder us as they will. Thou
hast made us like sheep sold for food, scattered here
13 and there among the heathen; thou hast bartered away
thy people without profit, asking no rich amends for
14 thy loss. Thou hast turned us into a laughing-stock for
our neighbours, mocked and derided by all who dwell
15 around; till the heathen make a by-word of us, and
16 Gentiles toss their heads at us in scorn. Ever my dis-
grace confronts me; my cheeks are covered with
17 blushes, as I hear nothing but reproach and reviling,
see none but enemies, none but persecutors.
- 18 All this has come upon us, and it was not that we
19 had forgotten thee. We have not been untrue to thy
covenant, or withdrawn our hearts from thee, that we
20 should let our steps wander away from thy paths. Why
hast thou brought us so low, with misery all around
21 us, darkness hanging over us? If we had forgotten
the name of our own God, and spread out our hands

v. 19. In the Hebrew text, "that our step should wander away."

v. 20. "With misery all around us"; according to the Hebrew text, "in a place of monsters."

22 in prayer to the gods of the alien, would not he know
of it? He can read the secrets of men's hearts.
How is it, then, that we face death at every moment
for thy sake, reckoned no better than sheep marked
23 down for slaughter? Bestir thyself, Lord, why dost
thou sleep on? Awake, do not banish us from thy
24 presence for ever. How canst thou turn thy face away,
25 without a thought for our need and our affliction? Our
pride is bowed in the dust; prostrate, we cannot lift
26 ourselves from the ground. Arise, Lord, and help us;
in thy mercy, claim us as thy own.

PSALM 44

(To the choir-master. Melody, The Lilies. To the
sons of Core. A maskil. A love-song.)

2 **J**OYFUL the thoughts that well up from my heart, the
King's honour for my theme; my tongue flows
3 readily as the pen of a swift writer. Thine is more than
mortal beauty, thy lips overflow with gracious utter-
ance; the blessings God has granted thee can never
4,5 fail. Gird on thy sword at thy side, great warrior, gird
thyself with all thy majesty and all thy beauty; ride
on triumphant, in the name of faithfulness and justice.

v. 5. Vg. "Make ready, ride on triumphant, and take thy
crown, in the name of faithfulness, and mercy, and justice. Thy
own wonderful deeds shall be thy passport."

6 Dread counsel thy own might shall give thee; so sharp
 are thy arrows, subduing nations to thy will, daunting
 7 the hearts of the king's enemies. Thy throne, O God,
 endures for ever and ever, the sceptre of thy royalty
 8 is a rod that rules true; thou hast been a friend to
 right, an enemy to wrong, and God, thy own God, has
 given thee an unction to bring thee pride beyond any
 9 of thy fellows. Thy garments are scented with myrrh,
 and aloes, and cassia; from ivory palaces there are
 harps sounding in thy honour. Daughters of kings
 10 come out to meet thee; at thy right hand stands the
 11 queen, in Ophir gold arrayed. (Listen, my daughter,
 and consider my words attentively; thou art to forget,
 henceforward, thy own nation, and the house of thy
 12 fathers; thy beauty, now, is all for the king's delight;
 13 he is thy Lord, and worship belongs to him.) The
 people of Tyre, too, will have its presents to bring;
 the noblest of its citizens will be courting thy favour.
 14,15 She comes, the princess, all fair to see, her robe of

v. 7. "Thy throne, O God"; various other ways of taking these words have been suggested, as, for example, "God is (the support of) thy throne." None of these has met with general acceptance. This verse and the following are applied to our Lord in the Epistle to the Hebrews (1:8).

vv. 9, 10. *Vg.* "Thy garments are scented with myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, stored till now in ivory palaces, whence the daughters of kings have brought them as gifts to do thee honour. At thy right hand stands the queen, in a vesture of gold, all hung about with embroidery."

v. 12. "Thy Lord"; *Vg.* "thy Lord and God."

vv. 14, 15. *Vg.* "All her splendour is the splendour of a princess through and through; so bedecked is she with embroidery, and tassels of gold. The maidens of her court will follow her into the King's presence."

golden cloth, a robe of rich embroidery, to meet the
King. The maidens of her court follow her into thy
16 presence, all rejoicing, all triumph, as they enter the
17 king's palace! Thou shalt have sons worthy of thy own
fathers, and divide a world between them for their
18 domains. While time lasts, thy name shall never be
forgotten; age after age, nations will do thee honour.

PSALM 45

(To the choir-master. . To the sons of Core. Melody,
The Virgins. A Song.)

2 **G**OD is our refuge and stronghold; sovereign aid
3 he has brought us in the hour of peril. Not for
us to be afraid, though earth should tumble about us,
and the hills be carried away into the depths of the
4 sea. See how its waters rage and roar, how the hills
tremble before its might! The Lord of hosts is with
5 us, the God of Jacob is our refuge. The city of God,
enriched with flowing waters, is the chosen sanctu-
6 ary of the most High, God dwells within her, and

v. 4. The second half of this verse is omitted in the Vulgate; the first reads, "See how their torrents rage and roar, how the hills tremble before his might."

v. 5. There may be a reference here to II Paralip. 32:4.

v. 6. Some connect this psalm with the defeat of Sennacherib (cf. IV Kings 19:35).

7 she stands unmoved; with break of dawn he will grant
8 her deliverance. Nations may be in turmoil, and
9 thrones totter, earth shrink away before his voice; but
10 the Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our
11 refuge. Come near, and see God's acts, his marvellous
12 acts done on earth; how he puts an end to wars all
over the world, the bow shivered, the lances shattered,
the shields burnt to ashes! Wait quietly, and you shall
have proof that I am God, claiming empire among the
nations, claiming empire over the world. The Lord of
hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.

PSALM 46

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core. A
psalm.)

2 **C**LAP YOUR hands, all you nations, in applause;
3 acclaim your God with cries of rejoicing. The
4 Lord is high above us, and worthy of dread; he is the
5 sovereign Ruler of all the earth; he has tamed the
6 nations to our will, bowed the Gentiles at our feet,
7 claimed us for his own portion, Jacob the fair, the well
8 beloved. God goes up, loud are the cries of victory; the
9 Lord goes up, loudly the trumpets peal. A psalm, a
psalm for our God, a psalm, a psalm for our King!
God is King of all the earth; sound the hymn of
praise! God reigns over the heathen, God sits en-

- 10 throned in holiness. The rulers of the nations throw
in their lot with us, that worship Abraham's God; a
God so high, he has all earth's princes for his vassals.

PSALM 47

(A song. A psalm. Of the sons of Core.)

- 2 **T**HE LORD is great, great honour is his due here in
3 the city where he, our God, dwells. Fair stands
his holy mountain, the pride of the whole earth, where
4 it slopes northward, the city of the great King; within
those walls, God has proved himself a sure defence.
5 See, where the kings of the earth have made common
6 cause, and met in arms! At the sight of this city all
7 was bewilderment, and confusion, and dismay; fear
took hold of them, sudden as the throes of a woman
8 in travail; the east wind falls on ocean-going ships
9 no more ruinously. Here, in this city of the Lord of
hosts, the city of our own God, we have proved the

v. 10. The Hebrew text seems to mean: "the rulers of the nations have been reckoned as a people belonging to the God of Abraham; God holds the shields of the earth; he is greatly exalted." The Vulgate has, "the rulers of the nations gather before him, the God of Abraham, men high in honour, powerful lords (literally, gods) of the earth."

v. 3. "Where it slopes northward"; literally, in the Hebrew text, "the thighs of the north." Some think mount Sion is here compared to that northern range of hills which was the Olympus of Assyrian mythology.

10 tale long since told us, that God has built her for
11 eternity; sheltered in thy temple, we give thanks for
12 our deliverance. O God, wherever thy name is known
13 on earth, thy praise is told, ever just in thy dealings;
14 well may the hill of Sion rejoice, well may the town-
15 ships of Juda triumph, at the decrees which thou,
Lord, hast executed. Walk about Sion, make the
round of her towers, and count the number of them;
mark well the defences that are hers, pass all her
strongholds in review; then give the word to the next
generation, Such is the God, who is our God for ever
and ever; our Shepherd eternally.

PSALM 48

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core. A
psalm.)

2 **L**ISTEN, you nations far and wide; let all the world
3 give hearing, poor clods of earth, and men nobly
4 born, for rich and poor the same lesson. Here are wise
5 words, thoughts of a discerning heart; mine to over-
hear mysteries, and reveal, with the harp's music,
things of deep import.

6 What need have I to be afraid in troubled times,
7 when malice dogs my heels and overtakes me, malice

v. 15. "Eternally"; the Hebrew text reads, "Until death,"
but there is some doubt of its genuineness.

- of foes who trust in their own strength, and boast of
 8 their great possessions? No man can deliver himself
 9 from his human lot, paying a ransom-price to God; too
 10 great is the cost of a man's soul; never will the means
 be his to prolong his days eternally and escape death.
 11 He will see wise men die; but reckless fools perish no
 less; their riches will go to others, and the grave will
 12 be their everlasting home. Age after age, they will
 live on there, under the fields they once called their
 13 own. Short is man's enjoyment of earthly goods;
 match him with the brute beasts, and he is no better
 than they.
- 14 Fatal path, that ensnares the reckless! Pitiful end of

v. 8. The Vulgate has, "What, can brother pay the penalty instead of brother; must not each pay his own?"; or perhaps, "Brother cannot ransom brother; shall a man, then, be able to ransom himself?" The Hebrew text appears to mean, "It is quite certain no man can ransom his brother," which is simpler, but does not fit in well with the context.

vv. 9, 10. The Vulgate has, "Man cannot give a ransom for his own life, so that he should be able to scheme on continually, live to eternity, and never meet death"; or perhaps, "His life is too precious a thing for that; he will labour for ever in vain (trying to find the ransom needed), even though he should live eternally."

vv. 11-13. The Vulgate here perhaps means, "He cannot grasp (the meaning of death) though he sees that," . . . etc. Instead of "the grave will be their everlasting home," . . . etc., the Hebrew text seems to read, "their innermost thought is, that their homes will last for ever, that their brief abodes will go on from generation to generation, and so they call their fields by their own names."

v. 13 (also *v.* 21). Vg. "Yet man, in his self-esteem, will not reflect (on what he is); match him" . . . etc.

v. 14. Vg. "Fatal path, that ensnares both themselves and the men who follow, trusting their advice."

15 the men that love life! There they lie in the world
beneath, huddled like sheep, with death for their
shepherd, the just for their masters; soon, soon their
16 image fades, the grave for its tenement. But my life
God will rescue from the power of that lower darkness,
17 a life that finds acceptance with him. Do not be dis-
turbed, then, when a man grows rich, and there is
18 no end to his household's magnificence; he cannot
take all that with him when he dies, magnificence will
19 not follow him to the grave. While life lasts, he calls
20 himself happy: None but will envy my success; but
soon he will be made one with the line of his fathers,
21 never again to see the light. Short is man's careless
enjoyment of earthly goods; match him with the brute
beasts, and he is no better than they.

P S A L M 49

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

IT IS THE Lord, the God of gods, that speaks; his
message goes out to all the earth, from the sun's rise
2 to its setting. Out of Sion, in perfect beauty, God

v. 15. "The just for their masters; soon, soon their image fades, the grave for its tenement"; Vg. "By tomorrow's dawn, the just will be triumphing over them; helpless, their pride fades away in the world beneath."

v. 19. "None but will envy my success"; Vg. "and gives thanks to thee (O God) for blessing him."

- 3 comes, revealed; he will keep silence no longer. Before
him goes a raging fire; there is a whirling storm round
4 about him. So, from on high, he summons heaven and
earth to witness the judgement pronounced on his
5 people: Muster in my presence my faithful servants,
6 who honour my covenant still with sacrifice. The
heavens themselves pronounce him just, God who is
our judge.
- 7 Listen, my people, to these words of mine, listen,
Israel, to the protestation I make thee; I, the God thou
8 ownest as God. I do not find fault with thee over thy
sacrifices; why, all day long thy burnt offerings smoke
9 before me. But the gifts I accept are not cattle from
10 thy stock, or buck-goats from thy folds; I own already
every wild beast in the forest, the hills are mine, and
11 the herds that people them: I know every bird that
flies in heaven; mine is all the verdure of the fields.
12 If I am hungry, I will not complain of it to thee, I,
who am master of earth and all that earth contains.
13 Wouldst thou have me eat bull's flesh, and drink the
14 blood of goats? The sacrifice thou must offer to God
is a sacrifice of praise, so wilt thou perform thy vows
15 to the most High. So, when thou criest to me in time
of trouble, I will deliver thee; then thou shalt honour
me as thou wilt.
- 16 But thus, to the sinner, God speaks: How is it that
thou canst repeat my commandments by rote, and
17 boast of my covenant with thee, and thou, all the

v. 11. "The herds that people them"; Vg. "their beauty."

while, hast no love for the amendment of thy ways,
18 casting every warning of mine to the winds? Swift
thou art to welcome the thief who crosses thy path,
19 to throw in thy lot with the adulterers. Malice wells
up from thy lips, and thy tongue is a ready engine of
20 deceit; thou wilt sit there in conclave, speaking evil of
21 thy brother, traducing thy own mother's son. Such
were thy ways, and should I make no sign? Should I
let thee think I am such as thou? Here is thy reproof;
22 here is thy indictment made plain to thee. Think well
on this, you that forget God, or his hand will fall
23 suddenly, and there will be no delivering you. He
honours me truly, who offers me a sacrifice of praise;
live aright, and you shall see the saving power of God.

P S A L M 50

1,2 (To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David, when
the prophet Nathan came to reproach him for his
adultery with Bethsabee.)

3 **H**AVE MERCY on me, O God, as thou art ever rich
in mercy; in the abundance of thy compassion,
4 blot out the record of my misdeeds. Wash me clean,
5 cleaner yet, from my guilt, purge me of my sin, the
guilt which I freely acknowledge, the sin which is
6 never lost to my sight. Thee only my sins have
offended; thou wast the witness of my wrong-doing;

thy sentence was deserved, and if thou art called in
7 question thou hast right on thy side. For indeed, I
was born in sin; guilt was with me already when my
8 mother conceived me. But thou art a lover of faithfulness,
and now, deep in my heart, thy wisdom has instructed me.
9 Sprinkle me with a wand of hyssop, and I shall be clean;
washed, I shall be whiter than snow;
10 tidings send me of good news and rejoicing, and the
body that lies in the dust shall thrill with pride.

11 Turn thy eyes away from my sins, blot out the
12 record of my guilt; my God, bring a clean heart to
birth within me; breathe new life, true life, into my
13 being. Do not banish me from thy presence, do not
14 take thy holy spirit away from me; give me back the
comfort of thy saving power, and strengthen me in
15 generous resolve. So will I teach the wicked to follow
thy paths; sinners shall come back to thy obedience.
16 My God, my Divine Deliverer, save me from the guilt
of bloodshed! This tongue shall boast of thy mercies;
17 O Lord, thou wilt open my lips, and my mouth shall
18 tell of thy praise. Thou hast no mind for sacrifice,
burnt-offerings, if I brought them, thou wouldst re-
19 fuse; the sacrifice God loves is a broken spirit; a heart
that is humbled and contrite thou, O God, wilt never
20 disdain. Lord, in thy great love send prosperity to

v. 20. It seems certain that David built a great part of the defences of Jerusalem (Josephus, *Antiquities*, VII, iii. 2). But some scholars think that these last two verses were added to the original psalm, after the capture of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon.

- 21 Sion, so that the walls of Jerusalem may rise. Then indeed thou wilt take pleasure in solemn sacrifice, in gift and burnt-offering; then indeed bullocks will be laid upon thy altar.

PSALM 51

- 1,2 (To the choir-master. A maskil. Of David, when Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, David went into Achimelech's house.)

- 3 **W**ILT THOU still take pride, infamous tyrant, in
4 thy power to harm? Evermore thou settest thy
5 heart on mischief; thy words are razor-edged, and thou
6 a traitor. Cruelty, never kindness, is thy study, treason,
7 never honest speech; well thy false lips love the word
8 that brings men to ruin. And will not God destroy
9 thee utterly, root thee up, drive thee from thy home,
till thy stock is known among living men no more?
8 Honest folk will watch, and wonder, and taunt him
9 then: So much for the man who would have none

v. 21. If this verse is part of the original psalm, it seems to imply that the sacrifice of beasts, though of no avail in reparation for grievous sin (verse 18), was a legitimate form of thanksgiving ceremony. Cf. Ps. 49:15.

vv. 3, 4. Vg. "Wilt thou take pride, tyrant, in thy own malice, in thy own ill-doing, all the long day? Thy tongue is skilled in mischief, thy wits razor-edged for treachery." Or the words, "all the long day," may be attached, not to what goes before, but to what follows.

of God's help, but relied on his store of riches, and
10 found his strength in knavery! And I? rooted like a
fruitful olive-tree in the house of my God, I will trust
11 for ever and for ever in his divine mercy; I will give
thee eternal thanks for all thou hast done, and boast
of thy name, the name thy true servants love so well.

PSALM 52

(To the choir-master. The melody, Mahalat. A maskil. Of David.)

2 **T**HERE IS NO God above us, is the fond thought of
reckless hearts. Warped natures everywhere and
hateful lives! There is not an innocent man among
3 them. God looks down from heaven at the race of
men, to find one soul that will reflect, and search for
4 him; but no, all have missed the mark and rebelled
against him; an innocent man is nowhere to be found.
5 What, can they learn nothing, all these traffickers in
iniquity, who feed themselves fat on this people of
6 mine, as if it were bread for their eating, and never

vv. 1-7. See notes on Psalm 18 above. In the part common to the two psalms, this one uses "God" where the earlier psalm uses "the Lord," but otherwise there is no substantial variation except in v. 6.

v. 6. Vg. "Where are the foes whom men held in honour? God has strewn" . . . etc. Some think this verse was inserted to celebrate the destruction of Sennacherib's army (IV Kings 19:35).

invoke God's name? What wonder if fear unmans them, where they have no cause for fear? Where are the foes that hemmed thee round? God has strewn the earth with their bones, routed as his enemies must
7 ever be. Oh, may Sion bring deliverance to Israel! Day of gladness for Jacob, day of Israel's triumph, when God restores the fortunes of his own people.

PSALM 53

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. A
2 maskil. Of David, when the men of Suph told Saul that David was in hiding among them.)

3 LORD, by the virtue of thy name deliver me, let thy
4 L sovereign power grant me redress; give a hearing,
Lord, to my plea; let me speak, and know thou art
5 listening. Scornful foes take arms against me, fierce
foes that grudge me life itself, with no thought of God
6 to check them. Ah, but God is here to help me; the
7 Lord has my safety in his keeping. Let the blow recoil
on my persecutors; ever faithful to thy word, do thou
8 overthrow them. So will I joyfully offer thee sacrifice,
and praise thy name, Lord, as praised it must ever be.
9 Who else has delivered me from all peril, and let me
see the downfall of my enemies?

v. 5. "Scornful"; Vg. "alien."

PSALM 54

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. A maskil. Of David.)

- 2 **G**IVE AUDIENCE to my prayer, O God; do not spurn
3 this plea of mine; hear and grant relief. No rest
4 I find in my distress, daunted ever by the hue and cry
5 of godless enemies, whose malicious spite would compass my ruin. My heart is full of whirling thoughts;
6 the fear of death overshadows me; trembling and
7 terrified, I see perils closing round me. Had I but wings, I cry, as a dove has wings, to fly away and find
8 rest! Far would I flee; the wilderness should be my
9 shelter, so I might find speedy refuge from the whirlwind and the storm.
- 10 Plunge them deep, Lord, in ruin, bring dissension
11 into their councils! Do I not see, already, violence and
12 sedition in the city? Day and night they make the
13 round of its walls, and all the while there is wrong
14 and oppression at the heart of it, its treacherous heart;
15 cruelty and cunning walk ever in its streets. Had some
16 enemy decried me, I could have borne it patiently;
17 some open ill-wisher, I could have sheltered myself
18 from his attack. But thou, my second self, my familiar

v. 9. "The whirlwind," Vg. "the fears that daunt me."

v. 11. Vg. "Does not wrong stalk about the walls of it night and day? What is there at the heart of it but misery and crime?"

- 15 friend! How pleasant was the companionship we
 16 shared, thou and I; how lovingly we walked as fellow
 pilgrims to the house of God! May death overtake
 them, may the abyss swallow them up alive, their
 homes, their hearts so tainted with evil!
- 17 Still I will call upon God, and the Lord will save;
 18 still at evening and morn and noon I will cry aloud and
 make my plea known; he will not be deaf to my
 19 appeal. He will win my soul peace, will rescue me
 20 from attack, when many take part against me. He, the
 God who reigned before time was, will listen to me,
 will bring them low. Never a change of heart, never
 21 the fear of God; not one but will turn against his
 22 friend, break his pledged word. Smooth as butter
 their looks, when their hearts are all hatred; soft as
 oil their speech, yet never was drawn sword so deadly.
- 23 Cast the burden of thy cares upon the Lord, and he

v. 15. "The companionship we shared"; *Vg.* "the feast when we shared it."

v. 16. Cf. *Num.* 16:30-32.

v. 19. "When many take part against me"; the Vulgate here renders the Hebrew literally, "when those who took part with me were (few) among many." The Hebrew text is now generally interpreted as meaning "Those (at issue) with me amounted to many," but the phrase is awkward.

v. 21. "Never a change of heart"; this may be the sense of the Vulgate, but more probably (like the Septuagint Greek) it means, "So long they have gone unpunished."

vv. 21, 22. *Vg.* "His hand is raised now, to do justice. They violated his covenant, and still his frown was hidden from them, now his anger draws near; his words were so gentle, they soothed like oil, but in truth they are weapons of destruction." "His frown was hidden from them" may also be rendered, "they were scattered by his frown."

24 will sustain thee; never the innocent feet will he suffer
to fall. These, O God, thou wilt sink in a pit of ruin;
the blood-thirsty, the treacherous, will not live out half
their days; but I, Lord, will put my trust in thee.

PSALM 55

(To the choir-master. Melody, Yonat Elem Reho-
quim. Of David. A miktam. When the Philistines
had him in their hands at Gath.)

2 **H**AVE MERCY on me, O God, downtrodden evermore
3 by man's cruel oppression; evermore my ene-
4 mies tread me under foot, so many there are to make
5 war upon me. In thee, the most High, I will put my
6 trust when peril overtakes me. I claim God's promise;
7 my trust is in God, no mortal threat can daunt me.
8 Evermore they traduce me, have no thought but for
9 my undoing; conspire in secret, watching my steps as
10 they plot against my life! O God, requite their treach-
ery; trample on the Gentiles in thy anger. My wan-
dering life none knows as thou; no tear of mine but
thou dost hoard and record it. One cry raised to thee,

v. 4. Vg. "Day is no sooner up than peril overtakes me,
but I will put my trust in thee."

vv. 8, 9. Vg. "So worthless, and wilt thou be their pro-
tector? Thou, who dost bring nations to ruin when thou art
angry? Nay, my God, my life has no secrets from thee; no
tear of mine but is recorded in thy sight; faithful is thy
promise."

and my enemies are driven back; shall I doubt God is
11 on my side? I claim God's promise; my trust is in
12 God, man's threats cannot daunt me. The vows which
thou claimest from me, O God, my sacrifice of praise
13 shall fulfil; hast thou not saved my life from every
peril, my feet from every slip? And shall I not enjoy
God's favour, while the light of life is with me?

PSALM 56

(To the choir-master. Melody, Do not destroy. Of David. A miktam. When he took refuge from Saul in a cave.)

2 **H**AVE MERCY on me, O God, have mercy on me;
here is a soul that puts its trust in thee; I will
take refuge under the shelter of thy wings, till the
3 storms pass by. I will cry out to the most high God,
4 the God who has ever befriended me: may he send
aid now from heaven to deliver me, and bring confusion
on my oppressors; his mercy, his faithfulness
5 be my speed! Fallen among lions I, that eat men's
flesh; here are envious teeth that bite deeper than spear
6 or arrow, tongues sharp as any sword. O God, mount
high above the heavens, till thy glory overshadows the

v. 5. Vg. "He has rescued me from a den of lions, where I fainted with fear; from the base breed of men, whose envious teeth" . . . etc.

7 whole earth. See where they have laid a snare for my
feet, to bring me low, dug a pit in my path; may it
8 be their own undoing! A heart to serve thee, my God,
a heart ready to serve thee; its song, its music are for
9 thee! Wake, all my skill, wake, echoes of harp and
10 viol; dawn shall find me watching; so will I give thee
thanks, Lord, for all the world to hear it, sing psalms
11 while the Gentiles listen, of thy mercy, high as heaven
12 itself, of thy faithfulness, that reaches to the clouds. O
God, mount high above the heavens, till thy glory
overshadows the whole earth.

PSALM 57

(To the choir-master. Melody, Do not destroy. Of David. A miktam.)

2 **N**OBLES ALL, are your thoughts honest thoughts?
And you, common folk, do you make just
3 award? See how you devise treachery in your hearts,
4 deal out to this land nothing but oppression! Sinners
that have lost their birthright; renegades and liars their
5 mothers bore them! They are venomous as serpents,
6 as the asp that turns a deaf ear and will not listen to
the snake-charmer's music, magician and skilful player

v. 9. "All my skill"; literally, "my glory," a term by which the Psalmist sometimes refers to himself, e.g. 29:13.

v. 2. The word here translated "nobles" is doubtful in the Hebrew, and does not appear in the Vulgate.

7 though he be. My God, break their cruel fangs; Lord,
8 shatter their jaws, strong as the jaws of lions. Like
spilt water let them run to waste, shoot none but harm-
9 less arrows; melt into nothing, the snail's way, perish
like the untimely birth that sees never the light of the
10 sun. Green stalks the whirlwind carries away, while
11 yonder pot still waits for fuel! The innocent man will
triumph at the sight of their punishment, as he dips
12 his hands in the blood of the evil-doer; Sure enough,
men will say, innocence has its reward, sure enough,
there is a God who grants redress here on earth.

PSALM 58

(To the choir-master. Melody, Do not destroy. Of David. A miktam. When Saul had his house watched, so as to put him to death.)

2 **O** God, deliver me from my enemies, rescue me
3 from their assaults; thwart their malice, disap-
4 point their lust for blood. See how they plot against
5 my life, how strong is their confederacy! Yet never

vv. 8-10. Vg. "They will vanish away like spilt water; when he bends his bow, they will be powerless before him. They will melt like wax; one touch of the flame, and they will see the sun no more; the flame will burn them alive, like young thorns that will grow into a thicket never." It seems probable that the Hebrew text in this passage is, and was from very early times, corrupt.

v. 5. "They run about and make themselves ready"; Vg. "I have kept steadfastly on my way."

- through any fault or offence of mine, Lord; unprovoked, they rush to the attack. Bestir thyself, come to my side and witness my wrongs. Lord of hosts, God of Israel, awake; visit mankind, and shew the treacherous no mercy. See how they come back at nightfall, like yelping dogs, to prowl about the city! Tongues that boast, lips that rail, as if none could hear them; and all the while thou, Lord, makest light of them, thou, in whose esteem all the nations are as nothing. To thee I look, O God, my strength and my refuge; my God, and all my hope of mercy.
- With that Divine aid, may I triumph over my enemies. Smite them down, my God, before they compass the overthrow of my people; let that power of thine overawe and crush them, my protector, my Master! Down with the guilty tongues, the boastful lips; let their own pride ensnare them, their cursing and their lies. Ruinous, ruinous be thy vengeance; shew them that there is a God who rules over Israel, rules over the utmost ends of the earth. Let them come back at nightfall, like yelping dogs, and prowl about the city; far and wide they will roam in search of their prey, and snarl with rage when they go unfed

v. 7. "Yelping"; *Vg.* "hungry."

v. 12. *Vg.* "Not for their destruction I pray; should my own people be lost to man's remembrance? Only let thy power disperse and crush them, my protector, my Master."

vv. 15, 16. The enemies of the Psalmist, who are patrolling the city to keep him in, will find that he has escaped, and will be scattered (as in verse 12) far and wide in their disappointed search for him.

- 17 at last. And I, ere long, will be proclaiming thy greatness, will be triumphing in the mercy thou hast shewn me, thou, my stronghold and my refuge in the day of
18 my distress. To thee I will sing, the God who delivers, the God who upholds me, the God to whom alone I look for mercy.

PSALM 59

(To the choir-master. The melody, Lily of the Law. A miktam. Of David. To be used for teaching. This was when he marched against the Syrians of Naharaim and Soba, and Joab on his way home defeated the men of Edom in the Valley of Salt, twelve thousand of them.)

- 3 **O** God, thou hast been disowning us and breaking
up our ranks; relent now, and bring us back to
4 our own. Heal the wounds of the land thou hast shaken and torn asunder, the land that trembles still.
5 A heavy burden thou hast made us bear; the wine
6 thou gavest us to drink dazed our senses. But now thou hast set up a standard to rally thy faithful servants, and to protect them from the archers' onset; now
7

v. 6. Literally, "thou hast set up a standard to those who fear thee, that they should escape from the bow." Some would read "truth" instead of "bow" in the Hebrew text, and interpret the second half of the sentence differently.

bring aid to the men thou lovest, give our prayer answer, and lift thy right hand to save.

- 8 God's word came to us from his sanctuary, In triumph I will divide up Sichem, and parcel out the
9 valley of Tents; to me Galaad, to me Manasse be-
10 longs; Ephraim is my helmet, Juda the staff I bear.
Now Moab, too, shall be my drudge; over Edom I
will claim my right; I will lead the Philistines away
11 in triumph. Such was the oracle; but now who is to
lead me on my march against this fortress, who is to
12 find an entrance for me into Edom, when thou, O
God, hast disowned us, and wilt not go into battle
13 with our armies? It is thou that must deliver us from
14 peril; the help of man is vain. Only through God
can we fight victoriously; only he can trample our
oppressors in the dust.

PSALM 60

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. Of David.)

- 2 **L**ISTEN, Lord, to this cry of appeal; do not let my
3 prayer go unheeded, though it be from the ends
of the earth that I call upon thee. When my heart

vv. 8-10. This would seem to be a quotation from some old prophecy, referring to the conquest of Chanaan. The literal sense of verse 10 is, "Moab is my wash-basin, I will cast out my shoe over Edom" . . . etc. Cf. Ruth 4:7.

misgives me, thou wilt set me high up on a rock, thou
4 wilt bring me repose; thou, my only hope, my strong
5 tower against the assault of my enemies. Oh let me
6 dwell for ever in thy tabernacle, let me take refuge
7 under the shelter of thy wings! Lord, thou hast lis-
8 tened to my prayer, thou hast given thy worshippers a
9 home to dwell in. Year upon year do thou add to the
king's reign; while generations come and go, may his
life still last. For ever may he reign under God's
favour; let mercy and faithfulness be his escort. Eter-
nally I will sing thy praises, day after day perform
my vows.

PSALM 61

(To the choir-master. The melody, Idithun. A
psalm. Of David.)

2 **N**O REST has my soul but in God's hands; to him
3 I look for deliverance. I have no other strong-
4 hold, no other deliverer but him; safe in his protec-
tion, I fear no deadly fall. Still one man my enemies
single out for their onslaught, all swept one way, as

v. 8. Vg. "His mercy and faithfulness are beyond all reck-
oning." It is not clear whether the mercy and faithfulness
referred to are those of God, or those of the king; the former
explanation seems more likely, since David himself is tradi-
tionally the author of the psalm.

- 5 though at hedge's gap or wall's breach. From my safe
fastness they would fain dislodge me, ready liars that
speak me fair, but ever with a curse in their hearts.
6 Yet even now, my soul, leave thyself in God's hands;
7 all my trust is in him. He is my stronghold and my
deliverer, my protector, bidding me stand unmoved.
8 God is all my defence and all my boast; my rock-
9 fastness, my refuge is in God. Israelites one and all,
put your confidence in him, and lay the homage of
your hearts at his feet; God is our defence for ever.
- 10 Man is a breath that passes; in Adam's sons there is
no trust. High in the scales they rise, weighed all
11 together and lighter than a breath. Put your faith in
extortion no more, boast no more of plunder; do not
12 set your heart on riches that are easy to win. Not once,
but twice I have heard God's voice of warning: All
13 power is God's. To thee, Lord, mercy belongs; thou
wilt repay every man the reward of his deeds.
-

v. 5. Vg. "Still I must go on my way thirsting, while these seek to dishonour me, men that once used to speak me fair, but ever with a curse in their hearts."

v. 10. Vg. "Man is but emptiness, light weigh the sons of Adam as false coin in the scales; vain are all their conspiracies to deceive."

PSALM 62

(A psalm. Of David. This was when he was in the desert of Juda.)

2 **O** GOD, THOU art my God; how eager my quest for
3 thee, body athirst and soul longing for thee, like
4 some parched wilderness, where stream is none. So,
5 in the holy place, I contemplate thee, ready for the
6 revelation of thy greatness, thy glory. To win thy
7 favour is dearer to me than life itself; my songs of
8 praise can no more be withheld. So, all my life long,
9 I will bless thee, holding up my hands in honour of thy
10 name; my heart filled, as with some rich feast, my
11 mouth, in joyful accents, singing thy praise. My
12 thoughts shall go out to thee at dawn, as I lie awake
 remembering thee, and the protection thou hast given
 me. Gladly I take shelter under thy wings, cling close
 to thee, borne up by thy protecting hand. In vain do
 my enemies plot against my life, soon to be swallowed
 up in the depths of earth, a prey to the sword, carrion
 for jackals! The king shall triumph in God's protec-
 tion, blessed as they are ever blessed who take their
 vows in his name; silence shall fall on the lips that
 muttered treason.

v. 2. Here the Vulgate, following the Hebrew text, has "in a parched wilderness" for "like a parched wilderness," and the beginning of verse 3 runs, "See, I have made pilgrimage to thy holy place."

PSALM 63

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

2 **O** God, listen to my prayer when I call for aid, save
3 me from the threats of my mortal foe. Thine
4 to defend me from this conspiracy of malice, the
5 thronging enemies that are bent on my hurt; the
6 tongues that wound like a sharpened sword, the
7 poisoned words aimed at me, like arrows. Stealthily
8 they attack the innocent; suddenly, from a safe vantage-
9 point, they wound him. Pledged to an evil resolve,
10 they plot to lay snares for me, sure that they will go
11 unseen. With what care they hatch their designs, plan-
 ning treason double-dyed! Let the thoughts of man's
 heart be deep as they will, yet God has arrows, too, to
 smite them with, sudden wounds to deal them; all
 their conspiring plays them false. Scornfully the on-
 lookers shake their heads, awe-stricken every one, and
 ready to tell the story of God's doings, understand his
 purposes at last. Honest men will rejoice and put their
 trust in the Lord; upright hearts will not boast in vain.

v. 7. "Planning treason double-dyed"; Vg. "Redoubled care that defeats its purpose"; literally, "they have failed through scrutinizing with scrutiny."

v. 8. Vg. "Yet God must triumph; their arrows do no more harm than children's toys."

v. 9. "Scornfully the onlookers shake their heads"; Vg. "The onlookers stand amazed."

PSALM 64

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David. A song.)

- 2 **O** God, thou shalt yet have praise in Sion; to thee
3 let the vow be paid, hearer of prayer. To thee
4 all mankind must look for pardon, weighed down by
5 its sinfulness till thou dost forgive. Blessed the man
 on whom thy choice falls, whom thou takest to dwell
 with thee in thy own domain! Fill these hearts with
 love of thy house, with awe of thy holy temple.
6 Wonderful the miracles thou shewest when in mercy
 thou dost hear us, O God our Saviour; at the bounds
7 of earth, far over the seas, in thee we hope. What
 power girds thee about! In thy strength the moun-
8 tains stand firm; thou dost calm the raging of the
 sea, raging sea-billows, ay, and the turmoil of angry
9 nations. Thy portents strike terror at the world's end,
 fill the lands of sunrise and sunset with rejoicing.
10 And now thou hast brought relief to this land of
 ours, hast watered and greatly enriched it; from that
 deep channel whence thy divine ordinance provides

v. 2. The Hebrew text omits "at Jerusalem," given by the Septuagint Greek and by the Vulgate at the end of this verse.

v. 4. *Vg.* "And though the cause of the wicked has prevailed against us, do thou restore a sinful people to thy favour."

v. 6. *Vg.* "Wonderful in its ordered worship. Listen to us, O God our Saviour" . . . etc.

v. 8. *Vg.* "That stirs up the depths of the sea, and sets its billows roaring; portents that fill the heathen with dismay."

- 11 our human needs. Thine to water its furrows, loosen
its clods with soft showers, bless it with fruitfulness.
12 Thy bounty it is that crowns the year; where thy feet
13 have passed, the stream of plenty flows; flow, through
the desert pastures, till all the hill-sides are gaily clad,
14 herds throng the fields, and the valleys stand deep in
corn; the shout of joy everywhere, everywhere the
hymn of praise.

PSALM 65

(To the choir-master. A song. A psalm.)

- LET THE WHOLE world keep holiday in God's presence,
2 L sing praise to his name, pay homage to his glory!
3 Cry out to God, What dread, Lord, thy acts inspire!
How great is that might of thine, which makes thy
4 enemies cringe before thee! Let the whole earth wor-
5 ship thee, sing of thee, sing praises to thy name. Come
near, and see what God does, how wonderful he is in
6 his dealings with human kind, how he turns the sea
into land, and lets men cross a river dry-shod; we will
7 see it, and give joyful thanks to him. In that power

v. 11. Vg. "Make earth's channels dance, make its fruits
abound with the showers that fall on it, till it blossoms forth
joyfully."

v. 12. "Where thy feet have passed, the stream of plenty
flows"; Vg. "The fields, through thee, will be thick with
harvest."

of his he reigns for ever, and has eyes for what the
8 Gentiles do; let rebellious souls tame their pride. Bless
the name of our God, you Gentiles, echo the sound of
his praise.

9 God's will is we should live yet; he does not suffer
10 our steps to falter. Yes, Lord, thou hast put us to the
11 proof, tested us as men test silver in the fire; led us
12 into a snare, and bowed our backs with trouble, while
human masters rode us down; our way led through
fire and water, but now thou hast brought us out into
13 a place of repose. See, I come into thy house with
14 burnt-offerings, to pay thee all the vows these lips have
framed, this mouth has uttered, when trouble came
15 upon me. Fat burnt-offerings of sheep shall be thine,
and the smoke of ram's flesh; bullocks and goats shall
16 be thy sacrifice. Come and listen, all you who worship
God, while I tell of the great mercies he has shewn
17 me; how this voice of mine cried out to him, this
18 tongue did him honour. Would God listen to me, if
19 my heart were set on wrong? And God has listened
to me; given heed to my cry for succour. Blessed be
God, who does not reject my prayer, does not with-
hold his mercy from me.

PSALM 66

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.)

2 **M**AY God be merciful to us, and bless us; may he
3 grant us the favour of his smile. Make known
thy will, O God, wide as earth; make known among
4 all nations thy saving power. Honour to thee, O God,
5 from the nations, honour from all the nations! The
Gentiles, too, may rejoice and be glad; a whole world
abides thy judgement, and the Gentiles, too, obey
6 on earth thy sovereignty. Honour to thee, O God, from
7 the nations, honour from all the nations! The land
has yielded its harvest; God, our own God, has blessed
8 us; may God grant his blessing, and may earth, far
and wide, do him reverence.

PSALM 67

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm. A song.)

2 **L**ET God bestir himself, needs must his foes be scat-
tered, their malice take flight before his coming.
3 Vanish the wicked at God's presence as the smoke
4 vanishes, as wax melts at the fire, while the just keep
holiday and rejoice at the sight of him, glad and con-
5 tent. Sing, then, in God's honour, praise his name
with a psalm; a royal progress through the wilderness

- for the God, whose name is Javé. Triumph in his
6 presence; he is a father to the orphan, and gives the
widow redress, this God who dwells apart in holiness.
7 This is the God who makes a home for the outcast,
restores the captives to safety, leaves none but the
rebels to find their abode in the wilderness.
8 O God, when thou didst go forth at the head of
thy people, on that royal progress of thine through
9 the desert, how the earth shook, how the sky broke
at God's coming, how even Sinai shook, when the
10 God of Israel came! And on this thy own land, O
God, thou sendest rain to be a mark of thy favour;
11 all parched it lies, and thou dost bring it relief. All
living things that dwell in it are thy pensioners; so
kindly, O God, is the provision thou hast made for
the poor.
12 Word has come from the Lord, good news borne
13 on a multitude of lips: Routed the kings, routed their
armies; they have left their spoils for housewives to
14 carry away; never shone silver so bright on a dove's
feathers, never gold so fair on a dove's wings; and you,
all the while, resting quiet among the sheepfolds!
15 White fell the snows on Salmon, when the Lord put
kings to rout.
16 Basan's hills are high, Basan's hills are rugged;
17 must you turn your eyes, rugged hills, towards God's

v. 7. Vg. "This is the God who unites in peace the families that were scattered, brings the prisoners back in the flower of their manhood; the outlaws, too, that lurked in barrows among the hills."

mountain, and envy what you see? The mountain where God loves and will ever love to dwell.

- 18 See where God's chariot comes, with twenty legions
for its escort; thousands upon thousands; comes from
19 Sinai to this his sanctuary. Thou dost mount up on
high, thou dost capture thy spoil, and men must be
thy tribute; the heathen must make way for the Lord
20 God to dwell in their midst. Blessed be the Lord now
and ever, the God who bears our burdens, and wins
21 us the victory. Our God is a God of deliverance; Javé
22 is a Lord who saves from peril of death. God will
smite the heads of his enemies, smite the proud locks

vv. 12-17. Vg. "Here are bringers of good news, with a message the Lord has given them, from the army he leads; a king, leading the armies of a beloved people, a people how well beloved! He bids the favourites of his court divide the spoil between them. Live at peace in the midst of your inheritance, and (riches shall be yours like) the silver that covers the dove's wings, like the sheen of gold on its back. He who dwells in heaven has strewn the ground with (the wealth of) kings, like the snow that lies white on Salmon. God's mountain, how fruitful it is! How rugged, yet how fruitful it is! What need to look up enviously at the mountain heights? It is this mountain God has chosen for his dwelling-place; on this mountain the Lord will dwell for ever."

v. 13. "House-wives"; literally, "she who dwells at home" in the Hebrew text. It seems possible the reference is to Jael (Judges 4:17-22). The early part of this psalm clearly refers to the victory of Barac over King Sisara; verses 8 and 9 being actually repeated from Judges 5:4 and 5. Similarly, we may compare verse 13 of the Hebrew with Judges 5:28, and verse 14 of the Hebrew with Judges 5:16.

v. 18. "Comes from Sinai to this his sanctuary"; Vg. "The Lord is their leader, as at Sinai, so here on his holy mountain."

v. 19. St. Paul in Eph. 4:5, apparently using some other text, has "gave gifts to men" instead of "received gifts of men."

- 23 of the men who live at ease in their wickedness. I will
 restore my people, the Lord says; I will restore them
 to their land, from Basan, from the shore of the high
 24 seas. Soon the blood of thy enemies will stain thy
 feet, stain the tongues of the jackals that follow thee.
 25 Thou comest, O God, a mark for all eyes; he comes,
 my God and my king, the dweller in the sanctuary.
 26 Before him go the singers, and the minstrels follow,
 while the maids play on their tambours round about.
 27 Give praise to the Lord God in this solemn assembly,
 28 sons of Israel! Here is Benjamin, youngest of the
 tribes, that marches in the van; here are the chieftains
 of Juda with their companies, chieftains, too, from
 Zabulon, chieftains from Naphtali.
- 29 Shew thy power, O God, shew thy Divine power,
 30 perfect thy own achievement among us; so, in thy
 temple at Jerusalem, kings shall offer gifts before thee.
 31 Tame the wild beasts of the marshes; fierce bulls that
 lord it over the peaceful herd of nations, down fall

v. 23. God says that he will bring back (his people, is presumably understood) from Basan, from the depths of the sea, according to the Hebrew text; the Vulgate has "to the depths." The sense is in any case obscure; the Vulgate is perhaps best understood as a mere geographical description of Northern Palestine, which lay between the Basan country and the Mediterranean.

v. 28. "That marches in the van"; Vg. "Rapt in worship."

v. 31. The sense of this verse is far from certain, but it is generally agreed that the wild beast of the marshes (literally, "reeds") is a symbol of the power of Egypt. "Down fall they, bringing silver pieces for their ransom"; Vg. "Ready to shut out thy loyal tributaries from their lands."

32 they, bringing silver pieces for their ransom; scatter the
 nations that delight in war, till Egypt sends hither her
 33 princes, till Ethiopia hastens to make her peace with
 God. Kingdoms of the earth, raise your voices in God's
 34 honour, sing a psalm to the Lord; a psalm to God, who
 mounts on the heavens, the immemorial heavens, and
 35 utters his word in a voice of thunder. Pay honour to
 God, the God whose splendour rests over Israel, who
 36 holds dominion high among the clouds. Awe dwells
 about it, his holy place! The God of Israel gives his
 people strength and courage; blessed be God!

PSALM 68

(To the choir-master. Melody: The Lilies. Of David.)

2 **O** GOD, save me; see how the waters close about me,
 3 threatening my very life! I am like one who
 sticks fast in deep mire, with no ground under his feet,
 one who has ventured out into mid-ocean, to be
 4 drowned by the storm. Hoarse my throat with cease-
 less crying for help; my eyes ache with looking up
 5 for mercy to my God. Countless as the hairs on my
 head are my wanton enemies, I am no match for the
 oppressors that wrong me. Should I make amends
 6 to them, I, that never robbed them? O God, thou

v. 34. "The immemorial heavens"; *Vg.* "Over against the dawn."

- knowest my frailties, no fault of mine is hidden from thy sight. Master, Lord of hosts, shall ill fortune of mine bring shame to those who trust in thee, make men repent of looking for aid to thee, the God of Israel? It is for thy sake that I have met with reproach, that I have so often blushed with confusion, an outcast among my own brethren, a stranger to my own mother's children. Was it not jealousy for the honour of thy house that consumed me; was it not uttered against thee, the reproach I bore?
- What more could I do? I humbled myself before them by fasting; and that, too, was matter for finding fault; I dressed in sackcloth, and they made a by-word of me. The idlers at the city gate would taunt me; the drunkards would make a song of me over their wine. To thee, Lord, I make my prayer; never man more needed thy good will. Listen to me, O God, full of mercy as thou art, faithful as thou art to thy promise of aid. Save me from sinking in the mire, rescue me from my enemies, from the deep waters that surround me. Let me not sink under the flood, swallowed up in its depths, and the well's mouth close above me. Listen to me, Lord, of thy gracious mercy, look down upon me in the abundance of thy pity; do not turn thy face away from thy servant in this time of trouble, give a speedy answer to my prayer. Draw near in my distress, and grant deliverance; relieve me, so hard pressed by my enemies.
- Lord, thou knowest how they reproach me, how I blush with shame; thou seest how many are my per-

21 secutors. Heart-broken with that shame, I pine away,
22 looking round for pity, where pity is none, for comfort,
23 where there is no comfort to be found. They gave me
24 gall to eat, and when I was thirsty they gave me
25 vinegar to drink. Let their feast be turned into a trap,
26 a net to catch them and theirs; ever the blind eye be
27 theirs, ever the halting loin. Pour out thy anger upon
28 them, let them be over-taken by thy avenging wrath;
29 let their dwelling-place be deserted, their tents for ever
30 uninhabited. Who is it they persecute? A man al-
31 ready afflicted by thee; hard was my hurt to bear, and
32 these have added to it. Do thou add guilt to guilt in
33 their reckoning; let them never find their way back
34 to thy favour; let their names be blotted out from the
35 record of the living, and never be written among the
36 just.

30 See how friendless I am, and how distressed! Let
31 thy help, O God, sustain me. I will sing in praise of
32 God's name, herald it gratefully; a more acceptable
33 sacrifice, this, to the Lord than any young bullock,
34 for all its promise of horn and hoof. Here is a sight
35 to make the afflicted rejoice; to cheer men's spirits in
36 their quest for God. The Lord listens to the prayer
37 of the destitute; he does not forget his servants in their
38 chains. To him be praise from sky, earth and sea, and
39 from all the creatures that move about them. God will
40 grant deliverance to Sion; the cities of Juda will rise

v. 22. Matt. 27:48.

v. 23. Rom. 11:9.

v. 26. Acts 1:20.

37 from their ruins, inhabited now and held firmly in possession, an inheritance for the race that serves him, a home for all true lovers of his name.

PSALM 69

(To the choir-master. Of David. A commemoration.)

2 **D**EIGN, O God, to set me free; Lord, make haste to
3 help me. Cover them with confusion and awe,
4 the enemies who plot against my life; send them away baffled, my ill-wishers, all their taunts turned to
5 blushes. Triumphant joy be theirs, who long for thee; Praise to the Lord, be ever their song, who look eagerly
6 now for thy succour. Thou seest me helpless and destitute; my God, help me. Thou art my champion and my deliverer; Lord, do not delay thy coming.

PSALM 70

2 **T**O THEE, O God, I turn for succour; may I never
3 be disappointed! Rescue and deliver me, faithful as thou art; listen to my plea, and save me. Let me find in thee a rock-fastness, a citadel of defence; I have

vv. 1-6. This psalm is nearly a repetition of Ps. 39, *vv.* 14-18.

- 4 no other stronghold, no other refuge, but thee. Rescue
me, Lord, from the power of the wicked, from the
5 grasp of lawlessness and oppression; thou, my Lord
and Master, the hope and confidence of my youth.
6 Thou hast upheld me from birth, thou hast guarded
me ever since I left my mother's womb; ever in thee
7 was my trust. Men stare at me now as a strange
portent, so signal the protection thou hast given me.
8 And evermore praise was on my lips, my constant
theme thy glory.
- 9 Do not cast me off now, in my old age; slowly my
10 strength ebbs, do not thou forsake me. I have enemies
11 that watch me closely, that conspire together, and
whisper, God has abandoned him; now is the time
to overtake and seize him; no one can bring him
12 rescue now. O God, do not keep thy distance from
13 me; hasten, my God, to aid me. Defeat their plot
against my life, and bring it to nothing; cover my
ill-wishers with confusion and shame.
- 14 Still will I hope on, praising thee ever more and
15 more. Day in, day out, these lips shall tell of thy faith-
fulness, of thy saving power, and find no end to them.
16 I will make the great acts of the Lord my theme; I
will commemorate the faithfulness that belongs only to
17 thee. It is thou, O God, that hast inspired me ever

v. 7. It is not clear in what sense the Psalmist was a portent or sign to his contemporaries, but the context suggests that he may be referring to his great age, and God's long preservation of him.

v. 15. "And find no end to them"; Vg. "All unskilled in learning."

18 since the days of my youth, and still I am found telling
the tale of thy wonders. O God, do not fail me, now
when I am old and grey-headed, until I have pro-
claimed thy great deeds to this, to all the generations
19 that will follow; that faithfulness of thine which
reaches up, O God, to the heavens, so signally made
manifest. There is none like thee, O God, none like
20 thee. Ah, how often thou hast burdened me with
bitter trouble! And still thou wouldst relent, and give
me back life, and bring me up again from the very
21 depths of the earth. Lift my head high; turn back,
22 and comfort me. So true to thy word, and shall
I not give thee thanks with psalm-music, praise
thee on the harp, O God, the Holy One of Israel?
23 Gladly these lips will sing of thee, this heart, which
24 owes thee its deliverance. Day in, day out, I will
repeat the story of thy faithfulness, what shame fell,
what confusion, on the men who sought to wrong me.

PSALM 71

(Of Solomon.)

GRANT to the king, O God, thy own skill in judge-
ment; the inheritor of a throne, may be just, as
2 thou art just; may he give thy people right awards,
3 and to the poor, redress. Such the harvest his subjects
shall reap, peace on every mountain, justice on every
4 hill-side. Right award he will give to friendless folk;

5 protect the children of the poor, and crush the op-
6 pressor. While a sun shines in heaven, while the moon
7 gives light, he will endure; kindly as the rain that
8 drops on the meadow grass, as the showers that water
9 the earth. His days will be crowned with the fair fruit
10 of justice, with the blessings of peace; and may those
11 days last till the moon shines no more.

12 From sea to sea, from the great river to the ends
13 of earth, his sway shall reach. In his presence rebels
14 shall bend the knee, all his enemies will be humbled
15 in the dust; gifts shall flow in from the lords of
16 Tharsis and the islanders, tribute from the kings of
17 Arabia and of Saba; all the kings of the earth must
needs bring their homage, all the nations serve him.
He will give the poor redress when they cry to him,
destitute folk, with none to befriend them; in their
need and helplessness, they shall have his compassion.
Their rights he will take into his keeping, set them
free from the claims of usury and oppression, dearly
avenge their blood. Long life shall be his, and gold
from Arabia shall be given him; men will pray for
him continually, bless his name evermore. The land
shall have good store of corn, high up the hill-sides,
rustling like the woods of Libanus; shall multiply its
citizens like grass on the ground. For ever let his name
be used in blessing, a name to endure while the sun
gives light; in him all the tribes of the earth shall be

v. 6. "The meadow grass"; Vg. "The shorn fleece."

v. 9. "The rebels"; Vg. "The Ethiopians."

- 18 enriched, all the nations shall extol him. Blessed be
the Lord God of Israel, who does wonderful deeds as
19 none else, and blessed for ever be his glorious name;
all the earth shall be filled with his glory, Amen, Amen.

PSALM 72

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

- 2 **W**HAT bounty God shews, what Divine bounty,
to the upright, to the pure of heart! Yet I was
near losing my foothold, felt the ground sink under
3 my steps, such heart-burning had I at the good fortune
4 of the sinners that flout his law; for them, never a
5 pang; health and sleek their bodies shew. Not for
these to share man's common lot of trouble; the
6 plagues which afflict humankind still pass them by. No
wonder if pride clings about them like a necklace, if
7 they flaunt their wrong-doing. How malice distils from
those pampered lives; how they betray the falseness
-

v. 19. At the end of this psalm the Vulgate, like the Hebrew text, adds: "Here end the praises of David, son of Jesse." It is the general opinion of commentators that one section or volume of the Psalms ended here. In the second half of the Psalter, as in the first, many psalms are to be found which claim King David as their author.

v. 4. Vg. "Men that have no hope in death, no comfort to support them in calamity."

v. 7. "Malice distils"; the sense of the Hebrew text is, "their eyes stand out," or possibly, "their eyes look out." "How they betray the falseness"; Vg. "How easily they win the desire."

8 of their hearts! Ever jeering, ever talking maliciously,
9 throned on high they preach injustice; their clamour
reaches heaven, and their false tales win currency on
earth.

10 Enviously the men of my own race look on, to see
11 them draining life's cup to the full; Can God, they ask,
be aware of this? Does the most High know of all that
12 passes? Look at these sinners, how they live at peace,
13 how lordly is their estate! Why then, thought I, it is
to no purpose that I have kept my heart true, and
14 washed my hands clean in pureness of living; still,
all the while, I am plagued for it, and no morning
15 comes but my scourging is renewed. Was I to share
their thoughts? Nay, that were to put the whole com-
16 pany of thy children in the wrong. I set myself to
17 read the riddle, but it proved a hard search, until I
betook myself to God's sanctuary, and considered,
18 there, what becomes of such men at last. The truth is,
thou art making a slippery path for their feet, ready
19 to plunge them in ruin; in a moment they are fallen,
20 vanished, engulfed in calamity. And thou, Lord, dost
rise up and brush aside their pretensions, as a waking
man his dream.

21 What if my mind was full of bitterness, what if I
22 was pierced to the heart? I am all dumbness, I am all
ignorance, standing there like a brute beast in thy

v. 17. "Betook myself to God's sanctuary"; or perhaps,
"entered into God's mysteries."

v. 20. "Rise up and brush aside"; *Vg.* "Brush aside in thy
holy city."

23 presence. Yet ever thou art at my side, ever holdest
24 me by my right hand. Thine to lead me in a way of
thy own choosing, thine to take me up to thyself at last
25 in glory. What else does heaven hold for me, but thy-
self? What crave I on earth but thy companionship?
26 This frame, this earthly being of mine must come to
an end; still God will be my heart's stronghold, etern-
27 nally my inheritance. Lost those others may be, who
desert thy cause, lost are all those who break their
28 troth with thee; I know no other content but clinging
to God, putting my trust in the Lord, my Master;
within the gates of royal Sion I will be the herald of
thy praise.

PSALM 73

(A maskil. Of Asaph.)

O God, hast thou altogether abandoned us? Sheep
of thy own pasturing, must we feel the fires of
2 thy vengeance? Bethink thee of the company thou
hast gathered, long ago; of the tribe thou hast chosen
to be thy own domain; of mount Sion, where thou hast
3 thy dwelling-place. Hither turn thy steps, where all
is ruin irretrievable; see what havoc thy enemies have

v. 3. Vg. "Lift up thy hand, to crush human pride for
ever; see" . . . etc.

- 4 wrought in the holy place, how their malice has raged
in thy very precincts, setting up its emblems for a
5 trophy of conquest. Blow after blow, like woodmen in
6 the forest, they have plied their axes, brought it down,
7 with pick and mallet, to the ground. They have set
fire to thy sanctuary, sullied the dwelling-place of thy
8 glory in the dust. They think to destroy us like one
9 man, sweep away every shrine of God in the land. Our
own emblems are nowhere to be seen; there are no
10 prophets left now, no wise counsellors. O God, shall
our enemy taunt us everlastingly, and defy thy name
11 to his heart's content? Why dost thou withhold thy
hand? That right hand of thine, must it always lie
idle in thy bosom?
- 12 Ours is a King who reigned before time was; here
13 on earth he has the means to bring deliverance. What
power but thine could sunder the shifting sea, crush
-

v. 4. "For a trophy of conquest"; Vg. "Strange emblems over gate-way and stair-head."

v. 5. "Plied their axes"; Vg. "broken down its doors with axes."

v. 8. Vg. "They have but one thought, the whole brood of them, to sweep away all God's worship (literally, holidays) from the land."

v. 9. "No wise counsellors"; Vg. "None will acknowledge us." The Hebrew text may mean "There is none of us who can tell how long" (the tyranny will last).

vv. 12-15. Some think these verses refer to the escape of Israel from Egypt and the miracles done in the wilderness, Leviathan (perhaps the crocodile) being used as a symbol of Egypt. Others think the whole is an allegorical account of the Creation.

v. 13. "Sunder"; Vg. "Heap up."

- 14 the power of the monster beneath its waters; shatter
Leviathan's power, and give him up as prey to the
15 sea-beasts? Thou didst open up fountains and streams
of water; thou, too, madest the swollen rivers run dry.
16 Thine is the day, thine the night; moon and sun are
17 of thy fashioning; thou hast fixed all the bounds of
earth, madest the summer, madest the cool of the year.
18 Wilt thou take no heed, when thy enemies taunt
thee, and in their recklessness set the name of Javé
19 at defiance? Must the dove be the vulture's prey?
Souls unbefriended, but for thee, wilt thou leave us
20 quite forgotten? Bethink thee of thy covenant; every-
where oppression lurks, or walks openly through
21 the fields. Do not let the humble go away disap-
pointed; teach the poor and the helpless to exalt thy
22 name. Bestir thyself, O God, to vindicate thy own
cause; do not forget the taunts which reckless men
23 hurl at thee all day long; do not overlook them, the
triumphant shouts of thy enemies, the ever growing
insolence that here defies thee.

v. 14. "Sea-beasts"; Vg. "Dwellers in the wilderness."

v. 15. "Swollen rivers"; Vg. "Rivers of Ethan" (cf. Ex. 13:20).

v. 19. "Must the dove be the vulture's prey?"; Vg. "Wilt thou throw us to wild beasts, the souls that acknowledge thee?"

v. 20. Vg. "Bethink thee of thy covenant; darkness has fallen on the land, and the lairs of oppression are all about us."

PSALM 74

(To the choir-master. The melody, Do not destroy.
A psalm. Of Asaph. A song.)

2 **W**E PRAISE thee, O God, and, praising thee, call
upon thy name; tell the story of thy wondrous
3 deeds. When the time is ripe, I will judge strictly;
4 faint grows the earth, and all that dwell on it; I alone
5 support its fabric. Rebel no more, I cry to the rebels,
6 Abate your pride, to the transgressors; would they
match themselves against the most High, hurl defiance
7 at God? Look east, look west, it will avail you nothing;
no help comes from the desert, or the high hills;
8 it is God who rules all, humbling one man and exalting
9 another. In the Lord's hand foams a full cup of spiced
wine; he holds it to one man's lips, then to another's;
but the dregs are not drained yet, sinners everywhere
10 must drink them. Evermore will I triumph, singing
11 praises to the God of Israel; mine to crush the pride
of every sinner, and raise high the drooping spirits of
the just.

vv. 3, 4. It is not clear whether the speaker is God or man, nor whether he is still the speaker in *vv. 5 sqq.* The two verses are ordinarily interpreted as God's own utterance, but a comparison of *v. 11* below suggests that an earthly judge may be intended; "the earth" in *v. 4* may also be translated "the land."

v. 7. "From the desert, or the high hills" (i.e., south or north); *Vg.* "From the desert mountains."

PSALM 75

(To the choir-master. For stringed instruments. A
A psalm. Of Asaph. A song.)

- 2 **I**T IS IN Juda God makes himself known, in Israel
3 that his name is extolled; there, in Salem, he makes
4 his abode, dwells in Sion. It was there he broke the
5 onset of the archers, broke shield, and sword, and
6 battle array. How wonderful was thy dawning over
7 the everlasting hills! Brave hearts, foiled of their pur-
8 pose, they slept their long sleep; lay there, no hand
9 stirring, the warriors in their pride; lay there, chariots
10 and horsemen, overthrown, God of Jacob, at thy word
11 of rebuke.
12 Who can resist thee, so terrible, so sudden in thy
13 anger? Loud rings in heaven the doom thou utterest;
14 earth trembles and is silent when God rouses himself
15 to execute his sentence, giving redress to those who are
16 scorned on earth. Its madness tamed, Edom shall do
17 thee honour; to thee the spared remnant of Emath
18 shall keep holiday. To the Lord your God let vows
19 be made and paid; bring gifts from every side to God,
20 the terrible; he it is that cows the hearts of princes,
21 feared among all the kings of the earth.

vv. 1-7. If the traditional title of this psalm gives the true account of it, the reference is probably to the defeat of Sennacherib (II Paralip. 32:21).

v. 11. Vg. "Human malice itself shall fall to praising thee; to thee the spared remnant of the conspiracy shall keep holiday."

PSALM 76

(To the choir-master. Melody, Idithun. Of Asaph.
A psalm.)

- 2 ACRY TO MY God in loud appeal, a cry to my God, to
3 win his hearing! To the Lord I look when dis-
tress comes upon me; in his presence I lift up my
hands amid the darkness, never wearying. My heart is
4 steeled against all consolation; it is to God my thoughts
turn with sighing, of God I muse, my heart all un-
5 comforted, my eyes unvisited by sleep, bewildered with
6 terror. I reflect upon days long past, the immemorial
7 years possess my mind; lonely musings occupy my
8 thoughts at midnight, stir my heart to its depths. Can
it be that God will always leave us forsaken, will never
9 shew us again his old kindness? Will he forget his
promise, and shut us out, age after age, from his
10 pity? Can God forget to be gracious, can anger move
11 him to withhold his mercy? For me, I tell myself,
this sorrow was reserved; the most High has altered
the fashion of his dealings with men.
12 To remember all the Lord has done, to recall those
13 wonderful acts of thine, since first the world was! To

v. 3. "Never wearying"; Vg. "There is no cheating away my grief."

v. 4. Vg. "It is to God my thoughts turn, in him lies all my content, all my study. So I wait, my heart uncomforted."

v. 11. Vg. "And now I resolve to begin afresh; it is at such times that the most High relents in his dealings with men."

ponder over all thy doings, pass thy wonders in review!
14 Thy path, O God, is hedged about with holiness;
15 what God is great as our God is great? Thy own
wonderful acts acclaim thy Deity; even to the Gentiles
16 thou wouldst make thy power known, forcing them
to set free thy people, the sons of Jacob and of Joseph.
17 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters trembled at
the sight of thee, moved to their inmost depths; the
18 waves roared, the clouds volleyed rain. To and fro thy
19 arrows passed, thy crackling thunders rolled, till all
the world shone with thy lightning, and the troubled
20 earth shook. Thy way led through the sea, the deep
tide made a road for thee, and none may read the
21 traces of thy passage, where thou, with Moses and
Aaron for thy shepherds, didst bring thy people out
on their journey.

PSALM 77

(A maskil. Of Asaph.)

2 **L**ISTEN, my people, to this testament of mine, do not
turn a deaf ear to the words I utter; I speak to you
with mysteries for my theme, read the riddles of long
3 ago. It is a story often heard, well known among us;
4 have not our fathers told it to us, a thing not to be
kept back from their children, from the generation

v. 2. Matt. 13:35.

5 which follows? Their talk was of God's praise, of his
 great power, of the wonderful deeds he did. He made
 a covenant with Jacob, gave Israel his law, command-
 6 ing our fathers to hand on the message, so that a new
 generation might learn it; sons would be born to take
 their place, and teach it to their own sons after them.
 7 They were to put their trust in God, ever remembering
 his Divine dealings with them, ever loyal to his com-
 8 mands; they were not to be like their fathers, a stub-
 born and defiant breed, a generation of false aims, of a
 spirit that broke faith with God.
 9 So it was that the sons of Ephraim, bow in hand,
 10 were routed in the day of battle. They were false to
 11 God's covenant, refused to follow his law, as if they
 had forgotten all his mercies, all those wonderful deeds
 12 of his they had witnessed. Had not their fathers seen
 13 wonders enough in Egypt, on the plains of Tanis, when
 he parted the sea to let them pass through it, making
 14 its waters stand firm as a mound of earth; when he
 led them with a cloud by day, with glowing fire all
 15 through the night? He pierced the rock, too, in the
 desert, and slaked their thirst as if from some deep
 16 pool, bidding the very stones yield water, till fountains
 gushed from them, abundant as rivers.

v. 9. "Ephraim" is probably used here to represent the people of Israel, as often in the prophets, who contrast it with "Juda" (cf. *v.* 68 below). The reference may be to the refusal to invade Palestine (Numbers 14), but the chronology of this psalm is difficult to disentangle.

v. 13. "As a mound of earth"; Vg. "as though in a cistern."

17 And still they went on offending him, there in the
18 wilderness, rebelling against the most High, challeng-
ing God in their thoughts to give them the food they
19 craved for. Bitterly they asked, Can God spread a
20 table for us in the wilderness? True, he smote the rock,
and made water flow from it, till the stream ran in
flood, but can he give bread too, and provide meat for
21 his people? All this the Lord heard, and his indigna-
tion blazed out; its mounting fires Jacob had fed, its
22 stream was ready to pour out on Israel. What, had
23 they no faith in God, no trust in his power to save? He
laid his command upon the clouds above them, threw
24 open the doors of heaven, and rained down manna for
them to eat. The bread of heaven was his gift to them;
25 man should eat the food of angels, and so their want
26 should be supplied abundantly. Next, he brewed a
storm in the eastern sky, let loose the fury of the
27 southern gale, raining down meat on them thick as
28 dust, birds on the wing, plentiful as the sea-sand. Into
29 their very camp it fell, close about their tents; and
they ate, and took their fill. All they asked, he granted
30 them; even now, their dreams came true. But while
31 the food was yet in their mouths God's anger rose,
and slew the strongest of them, caught them unawares,
all the flower of Israel.

v. 21. *Vg.* "All this the Lord heard, and waited a while; but already a fire was lit among the sons of Jacob, already his anger was mounting against Israel."

v. 25. "Of angels"; literally, "of the strong."

v. 26. *Vg.* "Next, he swept away the south wind from the sky; it was his power that sent them a south-west wind."

32 Yet, with all this, they continued to offend him; all
33 his wonderful deeds were forgotten. And still he took
away their lives like a breath, hurried their days to an
34 end. When he threatened them with death, they would
search after him, feel their need of God once more;
35 they would remind themselves that it was God who
had protected them, his almighty power that had de-
36 livered them. But still they were lying lips, they were
37 false tongues that spoke to him; their hearts were not
true to him, no loyalty bound them to his covenant.
38 Yet, such is his mercy, he would still pardon their
faults, and spare them from destruction; again and
again he turned his vengeance aside, let his anger die
39 down. He would not forget that they were flesh and
blood, no better than a breath of wind, that passes by
40 and never returns. How often the desert saw them in
revolt against him, how often, in those solitudes, they
41 defied his anger! Always new challenges to God's
power, new rebellions against the Holy One of Israel.
42 Had they forgotten all he did for them, that day
when he set them free from the power of their op-
43 pressor, all those miracles among the men of Egypt,
44 those portents in the plain of Tanis, when he turned
all their streams, all their channels into blood, so that
45 they could not drink? He sent out flies, to their ruin,
46 frogs to bring devastation on them, gave all their har-
vest over to the caterpillar, their tillage to the locust,
47 sent hail on their vineyards, frost on their mulberry-

v. 46. "The caterpillar"; Vg. "The mildew."

48 trees, let the hail have its way with their cattle, the
49 lightning with their flocks. He let his anger loose on
them in all its vehemence; what rage, what fury, what
50 havoc, as the angels of doom went on their errand! So,
the way made ready for his vengeance, he took toll of
their lives, including even their cattle under sentence
51 of death; on every first-born creature in Egypt, on the
first-fruits of increase in all the dwellings of Cham,
52 his stroke fell. Then, like a shepherd, he set his own
people on their way, led them, his own flock, through
53 the wilderness; guided them in safety, free from all
54 alarm, while the sea closed over their enemy. So he
brought them to that holy land of his, the mountain
55 slopes he took, with his own right hand for title; so
he drove out the heathen at their onset, parcelled out
the land to them by lot, to each his own inheritance,
bidding the tribes of Israel dwell where the heathen
had dwelt before them.

56 These were the men who defied the most high God,
and rebelled against him; would not observe his de-
57 crees, but turned away and broke faith with him as
their fathers had done, like a bow that plays the archer
58 false; made mountain shrines, to court his anger,
59 carved images, to awake his jealousy! The Lord heard
the bruit of it, and burned with anger, cast Israel away
60 in bitter scorn; he forsook his tabernacle in Silo, that
61 tabernacle where once he dwelt among men. A prey,
now, to the captor, all that once was strong, a prey
now, all that once was fair, to the power of the enemy;
62 he would leave his people at the mercy of the sword,

63 disdain his own inheritance. Their young men fed
64 the flames, and the maidens must go unwed; their
priests fell by the sword, and never a widow left to
mourn for them.

65 Then suddenly, like a man that wakes up from
sleep, like some warrior that lay, till now, bemused
66 with wine, the Lord roused himself; he smote his
enemies as they turned to flee, branded them for ever
67 with shame. But he refused, now, to make his dwell-
ing with Joseph; it was not the tribe of Ephraim he
68 would choose; he chose the tribe of Juda, and the hill
69 of Sion, there to bestow his love. And there he built
his sanctuary, immovable as heaven or earth, his own
70 unchanging handiwork. He chose David, too, for his
71 servant; took him away from herding the sheep; bade
him leave off following the ewes that were in milk, and
be the shepherd of Jacob's sons, his own people, of
72 Israel, his own domain. His was the loyal heart that
should tend them, his the skilful hand that should be
their guide.

v. 63. *Vg.* "Their young men fed the flames, and where
were the maidens to mourn for them? Their priests fell by
the sword, and who was left to comfort their widows?"

v. 66. "As they turned to flee," or possibly "in their but-
tocks" (1 Kings 5:9).

v. 69. *Vg.* "And there, on soil for ever undisturbed, he
built his sanctuary, terrible as the pasture-grounds of the wild
oxen."

PSALM 78

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

- 2 **O** GOD, the heathen have broken into thy inheritance; they have profaned the temple, thy sanctuary, and left Jerusalem in ruins. They have thrown the corpses of thy servants to feed all the birds of heaven; wild beasts prey on the carrion of the just;
- 3 blood has flowed like water on every side of Jerusalem,
- 4 and there was none to bury the dead. What a triumph was this for the nations that dwell around us; how
- 5 have our neighbours mocked and derided us! Lord, must we always taste thy vengeance, must thy jealous
- 6 anger still burn unquenched? Pour out this indignation of thine upon the nations that do not acknowledge
- 7 thee, on the kingdoms that never invoke thy name; see how they have made Jacob their prey, and left his
- 8 dwelling-place in ruins! Forget the long record of our sins, and haste in mercy to our side; never was need so sore as this.
- 9 O God, our Saviour, help us; deliver us, Lord, for the glory of thy name, pardon our sins for the sake
- 10 of thy own renown! Shall the heathen ask, What has become of their God? Shall our eyes never witness thy
- 11 vengeance upon the Gentiles, that open vengeance thou wilt take for thy servants' blood? Could but the

v. 11. "A race doomed to die"; Vg. "The children of the slain."

groaning of the captive reach thy presence! Thy arm
has not lost its strength; claim for thy own a race
12 doomed to die. Pour out seven-fold retribution into
the laps of our neighbours, for all the insults, Lord,
13 which they have put upon thee; and we, thy own
people, sheep of thy pasturing, will give thee thanks
for ever, echo, from one generation to the next, the
story of thy renown.

PSALM 79

(To the choir-master. Melody, The Lily of the Law.
Of Asaph. A psalm.)

2 **G**IVE audience, thou that art the guide of Israel,
that ledest Joseph with a shepherd's care. Thou
who art enthroned above the Cherubim, reveal thyself
3 to Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasse; exert thy sov-
4 ereign strength, and come to our aid. O God, restore
us to our own; smile upon us, and we shall find de-
5 liverance. Lord God of hosts, wilt thou always turn
6 away in anger from thy servants' prayer; daily wilt
thou allot us, for food, for drink, nothing but tears?
7 Thou hast made us a coveted prize to our neighbours,
8 enemies mock at our ill fortune! O God of hosts,
restore us to our own; smile upon us, and we shall find
deliverance.
9 Long ago, thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt,
10 rooting out the heathen to plant it here; thou didst

prepare the soil and it took root where thou hadst
11 planted it, filled the whole land. How it overshadowed the hills, how the cedars, divinely tall, were
12 overtopped by its branches! It spread out its tendrils to the sea, its shoots as far as the great river.
13 Why is it that in these days thou hast levelled its
14 wall, for every passer-by to rob it of its fruit? See how the wild boar ravages it, how it gives pasture to
15 every beast that roams! God of hosts, relent, look down from heaven, look to this vine, that needs thy
16 care. Revive the stock which thy own hand has planted, branches that by thee throve, and throve for
17 thee. Death be in thy frown for the men that have
18 cut it down and burned it. Thy chosen friends, the souls that by thee throve, and throve for thee, O let
19 thy hand protect them still! Henceforth we will never forsake thee; grant us life, and we will live only to
20 invoke thy name. Lord God of hosts, restore us to our own; smile upon us, and we shall find deliverance.

v. 14. Vg. "See how the wild boar ravages it, lone dweller in the woods, and finds pasture in it."

PSALM 80

(To the choir-master. Melody, The Wine-presses.
Of Asaph.)

- 2 **R**EJOICE we all in honour of the God who aids us;
3 cry out with gladness to the God of Jacob. Out
with psaltery and tambour, the harp, sweetly sound-
4 ing, and the zither! A new month, and a full moon;
5 blow the trumpet loud, to grace our festival! Duty
demands it of Israel; the God of Jacob has decreed
6 it, made it a law for Joseph, since the day he left
Egypt, and gained the further shore. With him, I
7 listened to an alien speech; it was I that eased his
shoulder of the burden, set his hands free, at last,
8 from the slavery of the hod! Such deliverance I
brought, when thou didst cry out to me in thy misery;
gave thee audience under a canopy of cloud, and
tested thee at the Waters of Rebellion.
- 9 Give heed, my people, to this warning of mine;
10 Israel, wilt thou listen? Then let no strange worship
find a home with thee; never let thy knees be bowed
11 to an alien God; am not I the Lord thy God, I, who
rescued thee from Egypt? Open thy mouth wide, and
12 thou shalt have thy fill. So I spoke, but my people
13 would not listen; Israel went on unheeding, till I was
fain to give their hard hearts free play, let them

v. 4. The new moon was always celebrated as a festival;
the full moon began the Pasch and the Feast of Tabernacles.

- 14 follow their own devices. Ah, if my people did but
listen to me! Did Israel but take me for their guide!
15 How lightly, then, would I bring their enemies low,
16 smite down their persecutors! The very men that
were once the Lord's enemies would be cringing at his
17 feet; such, for ever, should be their destiny; Israel
should have full ears of wheat to nourish them, and
honey dripping from the rock to their heart's content.

PSALM 81

(A psalm. Of Asaph.)

- SEE, WHERE he stands, the Ruler of all, among the
rulers assembled, comes forward to pronounce
2 judgement on the rulers themselves! Will you never
cease perverting justice, espousing the cause of the
3 wicked? Come, give redress to the poor and the
friendless, do right to the afflicted and the destitute;
4 to you need and poverty look for deliverance, rescue
5 them from the hand of wickedness. But no, ignorant
and unperceiving, they grope their way in darkness;
6 see how unstable are the props of earth! Gods you

vv. 16 and 17. Vg. "But now, the Lord's enemies have won him over; age after age their prosperity endures; full ears of wheat are still the nourishment he gives them, and honey" . . . etc.

v. 1. "Rulers," literally, "gods" as in *v.* 6, the Divine name being specially applied in this way to judges (cf. Ex. 21:6).

v. 6. John 10:34.

- are, I myself have declared it; favoured children, every
7 one of you, of the most High; yet the doom of mortals
awaits you, you shall fall with the fall of human
8 princes. Bestir thyself, Lord, bring the world to judgement; all the nations are thy own domain.

PSALM 82

(A song. A psalm. Of Asaph.)

- 2 **B**E SILENT, Lord, no longer. O God, do not keep
3 still now, do not hold back now; what turmoil among thy enemies; how their malice lifts
4 its head! Maliciously they plot against thy people, compass the ruin of the men thou hast set apart
5 for thyself; Come, they whisper, let us put an end to their sovereignty, so that the very name of Israel will
6 be remembered no more. All are agreed, all alike are
7 ranged in confederacy against thee; here Edom lies encamped, there Ismael; Moab, too, and the Agarenes;
8 Gebal, Ammon and Amelec, the Philistines, and the
9 folk that dwell at Tyre. Even Assyria has made common cause with them, lends her aid to these children of Lot.

v. 2. Vg. "O God, who can compare with thee?"

vv. 7-9. It is not certain, what was the occasion of this psalm. The names given suggest a simultaneous attack on the Jews by all their neighbours; the children of Lot are the Moabites and the Ammonites (Gen. 19:37).

10 Do to these what thou didst to Madian, to Sisara
 11 and Jabin at the brook of Cisson; the men who died
 12 at Endor, rotted there like dung on the ground. May
 their princes fare as Oreb fared, and Zeb; may the
 13 doom of Zebbee and Salmana be the doom of all their
 14 chieftains. And did they think to make God's chosen
 portion their spoil? My God, send them whirling this
 way and that, like leaves, like straws before the wind.
 15 See how the fire burns up the forest, how its flames
 16 scorch the mountain-side! So the storm of thy onset
 17 will rout them, thy fury will dismay them. Let their
 cheeks blush crimson with shame, Lord, till they come
 18 to sue for thy favour; confusion and dismay be theirs
 for ever, for ever let them be abashed and brought to
 19 nothing, till they, too, know the meaning of Javé's
 name, acknowledge thee as the most high God, the
 Overlord of earth.

PSALM 83

(To the choir-master. Melody, The Wine-presses.
 Of the sons of Core. A psalm.)

2,3 **L**ORD OF HOSTS, how I love thy dwelling-place! For the
 courts of the Lord's house, my soul faints with
 longing. The living God! at his name my heart, my
 4 whole being thrills with joy. Where else should the

vv. 10-12. See Judges ch. 14; ch. 7:25; and ch. 8.

- sparrow find a home, the dove a nest for her brood, but at thy altar, Lord of hosts, my King and my God?
- 5 How blessed, Lord, are those who dwell in thy house!
- 6 They will be ever praising thee. How blessed is the man who finds his strength in thee! Where there are
- 7 hearts set on pilgrimage, the parched ravine turns into a water-course at their coming, new-clad by the bounty
- 8 of returning rain. So, at each stage refreshed, they will reach Sion, and have sight there of the God who is above all gods.
- 9 Lord of hosts, listen to my prayer; God of Israel,
- 10 grant me audience! God, ever our protector, do not disregard us now; look favourably upon him whom
- 11 thou hast anointed. Willingly would I give a thousand of my days for one spent in thy courts! Willingly
- 12 reach were it but the threshold of my God's house, so I might dwell no more in the abode of sinners! Sun to enlighten, shield to protect us, the Lord God has favour, has honour to bestow. To innocent lives he
- 13 will never refuse his bounty; Lord of hosts, blessed ' the man who puts his confidence in thee.

vv. 6-8. Vg. "How blessed is the man who finds strength in thee! He sets his heart on an upward journey, that leads through a valley of weeping, but to his goal. To these, their Master grants his blessing; so, at each stage refreshed" . . . etc.

v. 10. It is not certain whether King David, or the people of Israel, is here referred to as the anointed (or Christ) of God.

v. 11. "Reach were it but the threshold of my God's house"; Vg. "Lie there forgotten in the house of my God."

v. 12. "Sun to enlighten, shield to protect us"; Vg. "God loves mercy and faithfulness."

(To the choir-master. Of the sons of Core. A psalm.)

- 2 **W**HAT BLESSINGS, Lord, thou hast granted to this
 3 land of thine, restoring Israel's fortunes, pardoning thy people's guilt, burying away the record of
 4 their sins, all thy anger calmed, thy fierce displeasure forgotten! And now, God of our deliverance, do thou
 5 restore us; no longer let us see thy frown. Wouldst thou always be indignant with us? Must thy resentment
 6 smoulder on, age after age? Nay, thou wilt relent, O God, and give fresh life, to rejoice the spirits
 7 of thy people. Shew us thy mercy, Lord; grant us thy deliverance!
- 9 Let me listen, now, to the voice of the Lord God; it is a message of peace he sends to his people; to his loyal servants, that come back, now, with all
 10 their heart to him. For us, his worshippers, deliverance is close at hand; in this land of ours, the
 11 Divine glory is to find a home. See, where mercy and faithfulness meet in one; how justice and peace are
 12 united in one embrace! Faithfulness grows up out of

v. 9. "With all their heart to him"; *Vg.* "To take counsel of their hearts"; cf. *Is.* 46:8. The Hebrew text has, "let them not turn back to their folly."

vv. 11, 12. These verses perhaps imply that God's fidelity to his promises and God's mercy have combined to restore the Jewish people; that his justice, satisfied with the expiation of their sins, no longer grudges them peace and well-being; that

13 the earth, and from heaven, redress looks down. The
Lord, now, will grant us his blessing, to make our
14 land yield its harvest; justice will go on before him,
deliverance follow where his feet tread.

PSALM 85

(A prayer. Of David.)

2 **T**URN THY ear, Lord, and listen to me in my help-
lessness and my need. Protect a life dedicated to
thyself; rescue a servant of thine that puts his trust
3 in thee. In thee, my own God; have mercy, O Lord;
4 for mercy I plead continually; comfort thy servant's
5 heart, this heart that aspires, Lord, to thee. Who is so
kind and forgiving, Lord, as thou art, who so rich in
6 mercy to all who invoke thee? Give a hearing, then,
7 Lord, to my prayer; listen to my plea when I cry
out to thee in a time of sore distress, counting on thy
8 audience. There is none like thee, Lord, among the
9 gods; none can do as thou doest. Lord, all the nations
thou hast made must needs come and worship thee,
10 honouring thy name, so great thou art, so marvellous
in thy doings, thou who alone art God.

loyalty to the old covenant is once more a native growth in the
land of Israel, and that God looks down to reward it. But the
picture may be a more general one.

11 Guide me, Lord, thy own way, thy faithful care my
 escort; be all my heart's direction reverence for thy
 12 name. O Lord my God, with all my heart I will give
 13 thee thanks, eternally hold thy name in honour for the
 greatness of the mercy thou hast shewed me, in res-
 14 cuing me thus from the lowest depths of hell. And
 now, O God, see how scornful foes have set upon me,
 how their dread conspiracy threatens my life, with no
 15 thought of thee to restrain it! But thou, Lord, art a
 God of mercy and pity, patient, full of compassion,
 16 true to thy promise. Look upon me and be merciful
 to me; rescue, with thy sovereign aid, a slave whose
 17 mother bore him to thy service! Shew me some token
 of thy favour; let my enemies see, abashed, how thou,
 Lord, dost help me, how thou, Lord, dost comfort me.

PSALM 86

(Of the sons of Core. A psalm. A song.)

2 **H**IS OWN building amidst the inviolate hills, the
 Lord loves Sion walls better than any other home
 3 in Israel. How high a boast, city of God, is made
 4 for thee, Mine it is to reckon the folk of Egypt, of

v. 11. "Be all my heart's direction reverence for thy name";
Vg. "make my heart thrill with reverence for thy name."

vv. 4-7. The sense of the original is wholly a matter of
 conjecture. The Vulgate has: "I can tell of Egypt and of
 Babylon as peoples that know me well. The Philistines, too,

- Babylon, too, among my citizens! Philistines, Tyrians,
Ethiopians, all must claim Sion as their birth-place;
5 None was ever born, the proverb shall run, that did
not take his birth from her; it was the most High, none
6 other, that founded her. This was their birth-place,
the Lord shall write over the muster-roll of the nations;
7 nor any but shall proclaim, in festal song, how from
that soil it drew its origin.

PSALM 87

(A song. A psalm. Of the sons of Core. To the
choir-master. The melody, Mahalat. For singing. A
maskil. Of Heman the Ezrahite.)

- 2,3 **L**ORD GOD, day and night I cry bitterly to thee; let my
prayer reach thy presence, give audience to my
4 entreaty, for indeed my heart is full of trouble. My
5 life sinks ever closer to the grave; I count as one of
those who go down into the abyss, like one powerless.
6 As well find my home among the dead, men laid low
in the grave, men thou rememberest no longer, cast

and the Tyrians, and the Ethiopian tribes, all have visited her.
Not for Sion to boast that this man or that man was born in
her, when she was founded by no other than the most High.
So the Lord proclaims, telling the tale of nations and princes
that have visited her. All the world, rejoicing, finds its
dwelling-place in thee."

v. 7. The Hebrew text appears to read: "And the singers
are like the dancers; all my springs are in thee."

7 away, now, from thy protecting hand. Such is the
place where thou hast laid me, in a deep pit where the
8 dark waters swirl; heavily thy anger weighs down on
me, and thou dost overwhelm me with its full flood.
9 Thou hast estranged all my acquaintance from me, so
that they treat me as a thing accursed; I lie in a prison
10 whence there is no escape, my eyes grow dim with
tears. So, all day long, I call upon thee, all day long
stretch out my hands to thee.

11 Not for the dead thy wonderful power is shewn:
not for pale shadows to return and give thee thanks.
12 There in the grave, how shall they recount thy mercies;
how shall they tell of thy faithfulness, now that life
13 is gone? How can there be talk of thy marvels in a
world of darkness, of thy favour in a land where all is
14 forgotten? In haste, Lord, I cry to thee; let my prayer
15 reach thee while there is yet time. Why dost thou
reject my plea, Lord, and turn thy face away from
16 me? Ever since youth, misery and mortal sickness
have been my lot; wearily I have borne thy visitations;
17 I am overwhelmed with thy anger, dismayed by thy
18 threats, that still cut me off like a flood, all at once
19 surrounding me. Friends and neighbours gone, a
world of shadows is all my company.

v. 16. "Wearily I have borne my visitations"; Vg. "Lifted
up only to be cast down."

(A maskil. Of Ethan to Ezrahite.)

- 2 **H**ERE is a song to put the Lord's mercies on record
 for ever; ages will pass, and still these words of
 3 mine shall proclaim thy faithfulness. There, in the
 heavens, thou hast framed a design of everlasting
 4 mercy; there thy faithful promise rests; I have made a
 5 sworn covenant with my chosen servant David: To
 all time I will make thy posterity continue, age after
 age I will bid thy throne endure.
- 6 And are not those heavens, Lord, witnesses of thy
 wonderful power, of thy faithfulness, before the court
 7 of the holy ones? Who is there above the clouds to
 rival the Lord; where is the Lord's like among all
 8 the sons of God? How honoured is God, in that
 assembly of the holy ones; how great he is, how high
 9 in reverence above all that stand about him! Lord
 God of hosts, who can compare with thee; in the
 power, Lord, that is thine, in the faithfulness that
 10 everywhere attends thee? It is thou that dost curb
 the pride of the sea, and calm the tumult of its waves;
 11 insolence lies crushed at thy feet, where thy strong
 12 arm has routed thy enemies. Thine are the heavens,
 thine the earth; author, thou, of the world and all it

v. 11. The word translated "insolence" is no doubt a proper noun, Rahab; either meaning Egypt (as in 86:4), or personifying the principle of Chaos which was destroyed by the Creation (cf. 73:13).

13 holds. The north wind and the south are of thy
fashioning; thy name wakes the glad echoes of Thabor
14 and Hermon. God of the strong arm, the sure, the
15 uplifted hand, right and justice are the pillars of thy
throne; mercy and faithfulness the heralds of thy
coming.

16 Happy, Lord, is the people that has ever a cry of
praise on its lips, that lives, Lord, in the smile of thy
17 protection! Evermore they take pride in thy name,
18 rejoice over thy just dealings. What else but thy glory
inspires their strength? What else but thy favour bids
19 us lift our heads? From the Lord, the Holy One of
Israel, that royal protection comes which is our shield.

20 Long ago, in a vision, thou didst make a promise to
thy faithful servants. Thou saidst, I have crowned you
a warrior king, chosen out among you a man to
21 honour. My servant David was ready to my hand;
22 on him my consecrating oil has been poured. My hand
shall strengthen him, my arm shall give him courage;
23 no enemy shall have his way with him, no envious
24 rival have power, henceforth, to injure him; I will
crush the foes that confront him, put all their malice
25 to rout. My faithfulness and mercy shall go with him;
26 as my champion he shall rise to greatness. I will make
his power rest on the sea; to the streams of the great
27 river his hand shall reach out. Thou art my Father,
he will cry out to me, thou art my God, my stronghold

v. 13. "The south"; Vg. "The sea."

v. 26. "The great river" is Euphrates, as in 71:8; 79:12.
The Hebrews called the south "the right."

28 and my refuge; and I will acknowledge him as my
29 first-born, overlord to all the kings of earth. I will
continue my favour towards him for ever, my covenant
30 with him shall remain unbroken; I will give him a
posterity that never fails, a throne enduring as heaven
31 itself. Do his children forsake my law, to follow paths
32 not mine; do they violate my decrees, leave my will
33 undone? Then they shall feel the rod for their trans-
34 gressions, I will scourge them for their sin, but I will
not cancel my gracious promise to him; never will I
35 be guilty of unfaithfulness, never will I violate my
36 covenant, or alter the decree once spoken. Pledged
stands my inviolable word, I will never be false to
37 David; his posterity shall continue for ever, his royalty,
38 too, shall last on in my presence like the sun; like the
moon's eternal orb, that bears witness in heaven un-
alterable.

39 And now? Now thou hast only loathing and scorn
for us; turnest away in anger from him thou hast
40 anointed. Thou hast annulled the covenant thou didst
make with thy servant, dishonoured his royalty in the
41 dust, broken down all the walls about him, and made
42 a ruin of his stronghold, till he is plundered by every
43 passer-by, a laughing-stock to all his neighbours. Thou
hast granted aid to the attacking armies, triumph to all
44 his enemies, foiling the thrust of his sword, and deny-
45 ing him thy succour in battle. Thou hast robbed him
of the bright glory that once was his; thou hast cast
46 down his throne to earth, cut his prosperity short be-
fore its time; confusion overwhelms him.

47 Lord, wilt thou always turn away so obdurately,
48 will the flame of thy anger never be quenched? Remember how frail a thing I am, how brief a destiny
49 thou hast granted to all Adam's sons. Where is the man that can live on, and leave death untasted; can ransom his life from the power of the world beneath?
50 Lord, where are those mercies of an earlier time, promised so faithfully to David? Remember how bitterly a
51 world's taunts assail thy people, and this one heart
52 must bear them all; shall they hurl taunts, Lord, these, thy enemies, after the man thou thyself hast anointed?
53 Blessed be the Lord for ever. Amen, Amen.

P S A L M 89

(A prayer. Of Moses, the man of God.)

2 **L**ORD, thou hast been our refuge from generation to
generation. Before the hills came to birth, before
the whole frame of the world was engendered, from
3 eternity to eternity, O God, thou art. And wilt thou
bring man to nothing, that thou sayest, Return, chil-
4 dren of Adam, to what you were? In thy sight, a thousand years are but as yesterday, that has come and gone,
5 or as one of the night-watches. Swiftly thou bearest our lives away, as a waking dream, or the green grass

v. 5. Vg. "What is man's life-time but a thing not worth the reckoning?"

- 6 that blooms fresh with the morning; night finds it
7 faded and dead. Still thy anger consumes us, thy dis-
8 pleasure denies us rest, so jealous thy scrutiny of our
9 wrong-doing, so clear our lives shew in the light of thy
10 presence. Day after day vanishes, and still thy anger
consumes us; swift as a breath our lives pass away.
11 What is our span of days? Seventy years it lasts, eighty
years, if we count among the heroes; for the most part,
12 toil and sorrow; years that vanish in a moment, and
we are gone. Alas, that so few heed thy vengeance,
13 measure thy anger by the reverence we owe thee!
Teach us to count every passing day, till our hearts find
wisdom.
- 13 Relent, Lord; must it be for ever? Be gracious to
14 thy servants. For us thy timely mercies, for us abiding
15 happiness and content; happiness that shall atone for
the time when thou didst afflict us, for the long years
16 of ill fortune. Let these eyes see thy purpose accom-
17 plished, to our own sons reveal thy glory; the favour
of the Lord our God smile on us! Prosper our doings,
Lord, prosper our doings yet.

v. 9. "Swift as a breath our lives pass away"; Vg. "The work of a lifetime is only gossamer."

v. 10. "If we count among the heroes"; with reference to Gen. 6:4; or the sense may be simply, "if we are strong men." "Years that vanish in a moment, and we are gone"; Vg. "And at last thy hand comes upon us in mercy, for our correction."

v. 12. Vg. "With such correction thou must needs assert thy power, chasten us and make us wise."

v. 16. Vg. "Look upon thy servants, thy own fashioning, and be the guide of their posterity."

PSALM 90

CONTENT if thou be to live with the most High for
 thy defence, under his Almighty shadow nestling
 2 still, him thy refuge, him thy stronghold thou mayst
 3 call, thy own God, in whom is all thy trust. He it is
 will rescue thee from every treacherous lure, every
 4 destroying plague. He will give thee the shelter of his
 arms; under his wings thou shalt find refuge, his
 5 faithful care thy watch and ward. Nothing shalt thou
 have to fear from nightly terrors, from the arrow that
 6 flies by day-light, from pestilence that walks to and
 fro in the darkness, from the death that wastes under
 7 the noon. Though a thousand fall at thy side, ten
 thousand at thy right hand, it shall never come next
 8 or near thee; rather, thy eyes shall look about thee, and
 see the reward of sinners.

9 He, the Lord, is thy refuge; thou hast found a strong-
 10 hold in the most High. There is no harm that can
 befall thee, no plague that shall come near thy dwell-
 11 ing. He has given charge to his angels concerning
 12 thee, to watch over thee wheresoever thou goest; they
 will hold thee up with their hands lest thou shouldst
 13 chance to trip on a stone. Thou shalt tread safely on

v. 3. "Every destroying plague"; Vg. "every whisper of harm."

v. 6. Vg. "From trouble that infests the darkness, from the assault of man or fiend under the noon."

v. 9. Vg. "Yes, Lord, thou art my hope; (my soul) thou hast found a stronghold in the most High."

v. 13. For "the asp" the Hebrew text has "the lion."

asp and adder, crush lion and serpent under thy feet.

- 14 He trusts in me, mine it is to deliver him; he ac-
knowledges my name, from me he shall have protec-
15 tion; when he calls upon me, I will listen, in affliction
I am at his side, to bring him safety and honour.
16 Length of days he shall have to content him, and find
in me deliverance.

PSALM 91

(A psalm. A song. On the sabbath day.)

- 2 SWEET it is to praise the Lord, to sing, most high
3 God, in honour of thy name; to proclaim thy
mercy and faithfulness at day-break and at the fall of
4 night. Here is a theme for ten-stringed harp and viol,
5 for music of voice and zither; so delightful, Lord,
is all thou doest, so thrills my heart at the sight of all
6 thou hast made. How magnificent is thy creation,
7 Lord, how unfathomable are thy purposes! And still,
8 too dull to learn, too slow to grasp his lesson, the
wrong-doer goes on in his busy wickedness. Still he
thrives, makes a brave show like the grass in spring,
9 yet is he doomed to perish eternally, whilst thou, Lord,
10 art for ever exalted on high. Vanished away thy ene-
mies, Lord, vanished away, and all their busy wicked-
ness scattered to the winds!

- 11 Thou givest me strength, that givest strength to the
wild oxen; refreshest me as with the touch of pure oil.
12 Blessed are these eyes with the sight of my enemies'
downfall, these ears with the tidings of insolent malice
13 defeated. The innocent man will flourish as the palm-
tree flourishes; he will grow to greatness as the cedars
14 grow on Libanus. Planted in the temple of the Lord,
15 growing up in the very courts of our God's house, the
innocent will flourish in a green old age, all freshness
16 and vigour still; theirs to proclaim how just is the
Lord our refuge, his dealings how clear of wrong.

PSALM 92

- THE LORD reigns as king, robed in majesty; royalty
the Lord has for robe and girdle. He it was that
2 founded the solid earth, to abide immovable. Firm
stood thy throne ere ever the world began; from all
3 eternity, thou art. Loud the rivers echo, Lord, loud
4 the rivers echo, crashing down in flood. Magnificent
the roar of eddying waters; magnificent the sea's rage;
magnificent above these, the Lord reigns in heaven.
5 How faithful, Lord, are thy promises! Holy is thy
house, and must needs be holy until the end of time.

v. 11. "Refreshest me as with the touch of pure oil"; Vg. "Even in my grey hairs his mercy is rich towards me." The meaning of the Hebrew text is doubtful.

v. 15. "All freshness and vigour still"; Vg. "prospering still."

2 **I**N THY Divine vengeance, Lord, in thy Divine ven-
 3 geance stand revealed! Judge of the world, mount
 4 thy throne, and give the proud their deserts! Must it
 5 be the sinners still, Lord, the sinners still that triumph?
 6 Shall there be no end to the prating, the rebellious talk,
 7 the boastfulness of wrong-doers? See, Lord, how they
 8 crush down thy people, afflict the land of thy choice,
 9 murder the widow and the stranger, slay the orphan!
 10 And they think, The Lord will never see it, the God
 11 of Israel pays no heed. Pay heed, rather, yourselves,
 12 dull hearts that count among my people; fools, learn
 13 your lesson ere it is too late. Is he deaf, the God who
 14 implanted hearing in us; is he blind, the God who
 15 gave us eyes to see? He who punishes nations, who
 16 taught man all that man knows, will he not call you
 17 to account? The Lord looks into men's hearts, and
 18 finds there illusion.

12 Happy, Lord, is the man whom thou dost chasten,
 13 reading him the lesson of thy law! For him, thou wilt
 14 lighten the time of adversity, digging a pit all the while
 15 to entrap the sinner. God will not abandon his people,
 16 will not desert his chosen land; ere long, his justice
 17 will reappear in judgement, claiming all upright hearts
 18 for its own. Who takes my part against the oppressor?
 19 Who rallies to my side against the wrong-doers? It is
 20 the Lord that helps me; but for that, the grave would
 21 soon be my resting-place. Still, when my foothold

19 seems lost, thy mercy, Lord, holds me up; amid all
the thronging cares that fill my heart, my soul finds
20 comfort in thy consolation. What part have these
unjust judges with thee, that make mischief in the
21 name of law? Let them harry the just as they will,
22 pass sentence of death upon the innocent, the Lord
will be my defence, in my God I shall find a rock-
23 fastness still. He will punish the wrong-doers, destroy
them in their wickedness; doubt not the Lord our God
will destroy them.

PSALM 94

COME, friends, rejoice we in the Lord's honour; cry
we out merrily to God, our strength and de-
2 liverer; with praises court his presence, singing a joyful
3 psalm! A high God is the Lord, a king high above
4 all the gods; beneath his hand lie the depths of earth,
5 his are the mountain peaks; his the ocean, for who but
he created it? What other power fashioned the dry
6 land? Come in, then, fall we down in worship, bow-
7 ing the knee before God who made us. Who but the

v. 20. "That make mischief in the name of law"; Vg. "Thy punishments are for the breakers of thy law"; literally, "Thou who dost fashion misfortune (or, perhaps, toil) in accordance with precept."

v. 3. The Roman Psalter, which is used in the liturgical recitation of the psalm, adds at the end of this verse "God will not abandon his people" (cf. 93:14).

- Lord is our God? And what are we, but folk of his
pasturing, sheep that follow his beckoning hand?
- 8 Would you but listen to his voice to-day! Do not
harden your hearts, as they were hardened once at
9 Meriba, at Massa in the wilderness. Your fathers put
me to the test, challenged me, and had proof of my
10 power, for forty years together; from that generation
I turned away in loathing; These, I said, are ever
wayward hearts, these have never learned to obey me.
11 And I took an oath in anger, They shall never attain
my rest.

PSALM 95

- 2 **S**ING THE Lord a new song; in the Lord's honour,
let the whole earth make melody! Sing to the
Lord, and bless his name; day after day never cease
3 to bear record of his power to save. Publish his glory
among the heathen; his wonderful acts for all the

vv. 8-11. See Hebrews 3:7-19, from which passage it appears that the words "for forty years together" go with what precedes them.

v. 10. The Roman Psalter has, "I lived close to that generation."

vv. 1-13. This psalm is to be found in a slightly altered form in I Paralip. 16 (*vv.* 23 and following). The "captivity" referred to in the Vulgate title is not that of Israel, but that of the Ark, which had been taken by the Philistines (I Kings 4:11), and seems not to have been a centre of worship for Israel until David brought it back to Jerusalem.

- 4 world to hear. How great is the Lord, how worthy
of honour! What other god is to be feared as he?
5 They are but fancied gods the heathen call divine;
6 the Lord, not they, made the heavens. Honour and
beauty are his escort; worship and magnificence the
attendants of his shrine.
- 7 Tribes of the heathen, make your offering to the
8 Lord, an offering to the Lord of glory and praise, an
offering of glory to the Lord's name; bring sacrifice,
9 come into his courts, worship the Lord in holy array.
Before the Lord's presence let the whole earth bow in
10 reverence; tell the heathen, The Lord is king now,
he has put the world in order, never to be thrown into
confusion more; he will give the nations a just award.
- 11 Rejoice, heaven, and let earth be glad; let the sea, and
12 all the sea contains, give thunderous applause. Smiling
the fields, and all the burden they bear; no tree in the
forest but will sing for joy to greet its Lord's coming.
- 13 He comes to rule the earth; brings the world justice,
to every race of men its due award.

PSALM 96

- 2 **T**HE LORD reigns as king; let earth be glad of it,
let the isles, the many isles, rejoice! All about him
are clouds and darkness; and from his throne, on right

v. 5. "Fancied gods"; Vg. "Devils."

v. 9. "In holy array"; the Hebrew text has "in holy
beauty" (cf. I Paralip. 16:29); Vg. "in his holy temple."

3 and justice pillared, a fire goes out in his presence,
 4 burning up his enemies on every side. In the flash
 of his lightning, the world shines revealed; earth sees,
 5 and trembles at the sight. The hills melt like wax at
 the presence of the Lord; his presence, whom all the
 6 earth obeys. The very heavens proclaim his faithful-
 7 ness; no nation but has witnessed his glory. Shame
 upon the men that worship carved images, and make
 their boast of false gods! Him all the powers of heaven,
 prostrate, adore.
 8 Glad news for Sion, rejoicing for Juda's townships,
 9 when thy judgements, Lord, are made known; art
 thou not sovereign Lord of earth, beyond measure
 10 exalted above all gods? They are God's friends, who
 were never friends to wrong; souls that are true to
 him he guards ever, rescues them from the power of
 11 evil-doers. Dawn of hope for the innocent, dawn of
 12 gladness for honest hearts! Rejoice and triumph, just
 souls, in the Lord, publish the sacred record of his
 renown.

v. 10. "They are God's friends, who were never friends to
 wrong"; Vg. "Lovers of the Lord, hate the evil thing."

v. 11. "Dawn of hope"; literally, "light has dawned." The
 Hebrew text has, "light has been sown."

PSALM 97

(A psalm.)

SING THE Lord a new song, a song of wonder at his doings; how his own right hand, his own holy
2 arm, brought him victory. The Lord has given proof
of his saving power, has vindicated his just dealings,
3 for all the nations to see; has remembered his gracious
promise, and kept faith with the house of Israel; no
corner of the world but has witnessed how our God
4 can save. In God's honour let all the earth keep holiday;
let all be song and rejoicing and festal melody!
5 Praise the Lord with the harp, with harp and psaltery's
6 music; with trumpets of metal, and the music of the
braying horn! Keep holiday in the presence of the
7 Lord, our King; the sea astir, and all that the sea holds,
8 the world astir, and all that dwell on it; the rivers
9 echoing their applause, the hills, too, rejoicing to see
the Lord come. He comes to judge the earth; brings
the world justice, to every race of men its due award.

PSALM 98

THE LORD is king, the nations are adread; he is
throned above the Cherubim, and earth trembles
2 before him. Great is the Lord who dwells in Sion,

v. 1. "The nations are adread"; Vg. "let the nations chafe as they will."

3 sovereign ruler of all peoples! Let them all praise that
 4 great name of thine, a name terrible and holy. Dearly
 thy kingly heart loves justice; thou dost bring redress
 to all, thou dost pronounce sentence and award for the
 5 sons of Jacob. Praise, then, the Lord our God, and
 6 bow down before his footstool; that, too, is holy. Re-
 member Moses and Aaron, and all those priests of his,
 Samuel and those others who called on his name, how
 7 the Lord listened when they called upon him. His
 voice came to them from the pillar of cloud; so it was
 they heard the decrees, the command he gave them.
 8 And thou, O Lord our God, didst listen to them, and
 they found thee a God of pardon; yet every fault of
 9 theirs thou wert quick to punish. Praise the Lord our
 God, and do worship on the holy mountain where he
 dwells; the Lord our God is holy.

PSALM 99

(A psalm. For thanksgiving.)

2 **L**ET THE whole earth keep holiday in God's honour;
 pay to the Lord the homage of your rejoicing,
 3 appear in his presence with glad hearts. Learn that it
 is the Lord, no other, who is God; his we are, he it

v. 5. The Hebrew text may mean "for he is holy" at the end of the verse.

v. 3. "His we are, it was he that made us": Vg. "We did not make ourselves, it was he that made us."

- was that made us; we are his own people, sheep of his
4 own pasturing. Pass through these gates, enter these
courts of his, with hymns of praise; give him thanks,
5 and bless his name. Gracious is the Lord, everlasting
his mercy; age after age, he is faithful to his promise
still.

PSALM 100

(Of David. A psalm.)

- OF MERCY and of justice my song shall be; a psalm
in thy honour, Lord, with a life of holiness for
2 its theme. Ah, when wilt thou grant me thy presence?
3 Here in my house I would live with stainless heart; no
ill purpose clouding my view, the transgressors of the
4 law my enemies. None such will I have at my side;
away, false hearts! Ill-doers shall be none of my ac-
5 quaintance. From me, the whisper of calumny shall
win no forgiveness; proud looks, and grasping ambi-
6 tion, find no place at my table. To honest hearts in
the land I will look for my company; my servants shall

v. 2. "I would live"; this verb, and all the verbs which follow, up to the end of the psalm, are given by the Vulgate in a past tense, which seems meant to describe the daily habits of the Psalmist. The Hebrew verbs in question are here understood as verbs referring to the future, describing what the course of the Psalmist's life will be when God has "granted his presence." This last phrase is thought by some commentators to mean the coming of the Ark to Jerusalem (II Kings 6).

- 7 be such as follow the path of innocence. No welcome
here for rebellious spirits, no standing in my presence
8 for men who talk deceitfully. Mine, ere long, to root
out from the land every guilty soul, till I purge the
Lord's city of all evil-doing.

PSALM 101

(A prayer for the friendless man, when he is troubled, and is pouring out his griefs before the Lord.)

- 2 **O** LORD, hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto
3 thee. Do not turn thy face away from me, but
lend me thy ear in time of affliction; give me swift
4 audience whenever I call upon thee. See how this life
of mine passes away like smoke, how this frame wastes
5 like a burning faggot! Drained of strength, like grass
the sun scorches, I leave my food untasted, forgotten;
6 I am spent with sighing, till my skin clings to my
7 bones. I am no better than a pelican out in the desert,
8 an owl on some ruined dwelling; I keep mournful
watch, lonely as a single sparrow on the house top.
9 Still my enemies taunt me, in their mad rage make a
10 byword of my name. Ashes are all my food, I drink
nothing but what comes to me mingled with my tears;
11 I shrink before thy vengeful anger, so low thou hast
12 brought me, who didst once lift me so high. Dwindling like a shadow as the days pass, wasting away,
like grass in the sun!

13 Lord, thou endurest for ever, thy name, age after
14 age, is not forgotten; surely thou wilt bestir thyself, and
give Sion redress! It is time, now, to take pity on her,
15 the hour has come. See how thy servants love her even
in ruin, how they water her dust with their tears!
16 Thy Divine name will be revered by the heathen,
17 honoured by all the kings of earth, when they hear
that the Lord has built Sion anew; that he has revealed
18 himself there in glory, has given heed to the prayer
19 of the afflicted, neglects their appeal no more. Be this
the story a new generation has to tell; a new people
20 will arise, to praise the Lord; the Lord, who looks
down from his sanctuary on high, viewing earth from
21 heaven, who has listened to the groans of the prisoners,
22 delivered a race that was doomed to die. There will
be talk of the Lord's name in Sion, of his praise in
23 Jerusalem, when peoples and kings meet there to pay
their homage.

24 Here, on my journey, he has brought my strength
25 to an end, cut short my days. What, my God, wilt
thou snatch me away, my life half done? Age after
26 age thy years endure; it was thou, Lord, that didst
lay the foundations of earth when time began, it was

v. 24. The first half of this verse, in the Vulgate, means literally, "he has answered him (or, it) in the journeying of his strength." With this reading, it seems best to understand God as the subject, and his people (referred to in verse 19 above) as receiving an answer from him: "Has he not answered his people's prayer, come mightily to their aid?" The second half of the verse is, in the Vulgate, "Give me warning of the time I have left me."

- 27 thy hand that built the heavens. They will perish,
but thou wilt remain; they will all be like a cloak that
grows thread-bare, and thou wilt lay them aside like a
28 garment, and exchange them for new; thou art un-
29 changing, thy years can never fail. Be it for our sons
to hold their lands in peace, and leave a race to serve
thee.

PSALM 102

(Of David.)

- 2 **B**LESS THE Lord, my soul, unite, all my powers, to
3 bless that holy name. Bless the Lord, my soul,
4 remembering all he has done for thee, how he pardons
all thy sins, heals all thy mortal ills, rescues thy life
from deadly peril, crowns thee with the blessings of
5 his mercy; how he contents all thy desire for good,
restores thy youth, as the eagle's plumage is restored.
6 The Lord's acts are acts of mercy, he offers every
7 wronged soul redress. Did he not make known his
thoughts to Moses, his hidden design to the sons of
Israel?
8 How pitying and gracious the Lord is, how patient,
9 how rich in mercy! He will not always be finding
10 fault, his frown does not last for ever; he does not
treat us as our sins deserve, does not exact the penalty
11 of our wrong-doing. High as heaven above the earth
12 towers his mercy for the men that fear him; far as the

east is from the west, he clears away our guilt from
13 us. For his own worshippers, the Lord has a father's
14 pity; does he not know the stuff of which we are made,
15 can he forget that we are only dust? Man's life is like
16 the grass, he blooms and dies like a flower in the
17 fields; once the hot wind has passed over it, it has
gone, forgotten by the place where it grew. But the
Lord's worshippers know no beginning or end of his
mercy; he will keep faith with their children's children,
18 do they but hold fast by his covenant, and live mindful
19 of his law. The Lord has set up his throne in heaven,
20 rules with universal sway. Bless the Lord, all you
angels of his; angels of sovereign strength, that carry
out his commandment, attentive to the word he utters;
21 bless the Lord, all you hosts of his, the servants that
22 perform his will; bless the Lord, all you creatures of
his in every corner of his dominion; and thou, my soul,
bless the Lord.

PSALM 103

(For David himself.)

BLESS THE Lord, my soul; O Lord my God, what
magnificence is thine! Glory and beauty are thy
2 clothing. The light is a garment thou dost wrap about
3 thee, the heavens a curtain thy hand unfolds. The

v. 16. "Forgotten by"; Vg. "Forgetting."

- waters of heaven are thy antechamber, the clouds thy chariot; on the wings of the wind thou dost come and go. Thou wilt have thy angels be like the winds, the servants that wait on thee like a flame of fire.
- The earth thou hast planted on its own firm base, undisturbed for all time. The deep once covered it, like a cloak; the waters stood high above the mountains, then cowered before thy rebuking word, fled away at thy voice of thunder, leaving the mountain-heights to rise, the valleys to sink into their appointed place! And to these waters thou hast given a frontier they may not pass; never must they flow back, and cover the earth again. He sends the torrents down the ravines, water-courses among the hills that give drink to every wild beast; here the wild asses may slake their thirst. The birds of heaven, too, will roost beside them; vocal is every bough with their music.
- From thy high dwelling-place thou dost send rain upon the hills; thy hand gives earth all her plenty. Grass must grow for the cattle; for men, too, she must put forth her shoots, if they are to bring corn out of the earth; if there is to be wine that will rejoice man's heart, oil to make his face shine, and bread that will keep man's strength from failing. Moisture there must

v. 4. "Angels," literally, "messengers." Some would translate, "Who makes messengers of the winds, servants out of the flaming fire." But see Heb. 1:7, which plainly supports the sense given above.

v. 6. See Gen. 1:9.

v. 16. "The forest trees"; literally, "the trees of the Lord."

17 be for the forest trees, for the cedars of Libanus, trees
of the Lord's own planting. Here it is the birds build
their nests; the stork makes its home in the fir
18 branches; finds refuge there such as the goats find in
the high hills, the hedge-hog in its cave.

19 He has given us the moon for our calendar; the sun
20 knows well the hour of his setting. Thou dost decree
darkness, and the night falls; in the night all the
21 forest is astir with prowling beasts; the young lions
go roaring after their prey, God's pensioners, asking for
22 their food. Then the sun rises, and they meet to lie
23 down in their dens, while man goes abroad to toil
24 and drudge till the evening. What diversity, Lord,
in thy creatures! What wisdom has designed them
all! There is nothing on earth but gives proof of thy
creative power.

25 There lies the vast ocean, stretching wide on every
hand; this, too, is peopled with living things past num-
26 ber, great creatures and small; the ships pass them on
their course. Leviathan himself is among them; him,
too, thou hast created to roam there at his pleasure.
27 And all look to thee to send them their food at the
28 appointed time; it is through thy gift they find it, thy
29 hand opens, and all are filled with content. But see,
thou hidest thy face, and they are dismayed; thou

v. 26. "To roam there at his pleasure"; it is possible to read another sense, whether in the Hebrew, in the Greek, or in the Latin; namely, that God has made the whale (or whatever creature Leviathan represents) as a jest for his own enjoyment.

30 takest their life from them, and they breathe no more,
go back to the dust they came from. Then thou send-
est forth thy spirit, and there is fresh creation; thou
dost repeople the face of earth.

31 Glory be to the Lord for ever, the Lord who takes
32 delight in his creatures. One glance from him makes
earth tremble; at his touch, the mountains are wreathed
33 in smoke. While life lasts, I will sing in the Lord's
honour; my thanks shall be his while I have breath
34 to thank him; may this praise of mine content him,
35 as he is all my content! Perish all sinners from the
land, let the wrong-doers be forgotten! But thou,
my soul, bless the Lord. Alleluia.

PSALM 104

2 **P**RAISE THE Lord, and call upon his name; tell the
story of his doings for all the nations to hear; greet
him with song and psalm, recount his acts of miracle.

3 Triumph in that holy name; let every heart that longs
4 for the Lord rejoice. On the Lord, on the Lord's
greatness still let your hearts dwell, on the Lord's pres-
5 ence be your hearts set. Remember the marvellous acts
6 he did, his miracles, his sentences of doom; are you not
the posterity of Abraham, his own servant, sons of that
7 Jacob on whom his choice fell? And he, the Lord, is
our own God, wide though his writ runs through all
8 the world. He keeps in everlasting memory that cov-

enant of his, that promise which a thousand ages might
9 not cancel. He gave Abraham a promise, bound him-
10 self to Isaac by an oath; by that law Jacob should live,
11 his Israel, bound to him with an eternal covenant. To
thee, he said, I will give the land of Chanaan, a por-
12 tion allotted to thee and thine. So few they were in
13 number; only a handful, living there as strangers! And
ever they passed on from country to country, the guests
14 of King or people; but he suffered none to harm them;
15 to kings themselves the warning came; Lay no hand
on them, never hurt them, servants anointed and true
spokesmen of mine.

16 And now he brought famine on the land, cutting
17 off all their supply of bread. But he had sent an envoy
to prepare the way for them, that very Joseph, who
18 was sold as a slave. Fetters held his feet, the yoke
19 galled his neck, but he proved a true prophet at last,
20 the Lord's accomplished word to vindicate him. Then
the king sent to release him; the proud ruler of many
21 peoples set him free, and appointed him master of his
household, lord of all the possessions that were his;
22 Joseph should teach his courtiers to be as Joseph was,
23 should train his aged counsellors in wisdom. So it
was that Israel came into Egypt, that Jacob dwelt as
an alien in the country of Cham.

v. 14. See Gen. 12:17.

vv. 18, 19. See Gen. 40, 41. *Vg.* "His feet were galled with fetters, till the iron pierced his inmost being; but a time came when his prophecies proved true, when an oracle from the Lord inspired him."

24 Time passed, and he gave his people great increase
25 of numbers, till it outmatched its rivals. And in these
he wrought a change of heart; they grew weary of his
people's presence, devised ruin for his worshippers.
26 And now he sent his servant Moses, and Aaron, the
27 man of his choice, to bring about those signs, those
miracles of his which the country of Cham would
28 witness. Dark night he sent to benight them, and still
29 his warnings went unheeded. He turned their supply
30 of water into blood, killing all the fish; frogs swarmed
31 out of the ground, even in their royal palaces; at his
32 word, flies attacked them, and gnats everywhere; hail
was the rain he gave them, and it brought fire that
33 burned up their country side; he shattered their vines
and fig-trees, broke down all the wood that grew in
34 their domains. He gave the word, and locusts came,
35 grasshoppers, too, past all numbering, eating up all
the grass they had, eating up all the crops their land
36 yielded. Then his hand fell upon their first-born, on
37 the first-fruits of all they had engendered; and so he
brought his people out, enriched with silver and gold,
no foot that stumbled among all their tribes.

38 Glad indeed was Egypt at their going, such fear of
39 them had overtaken it. He spread out a cloud to cover

v. 28. The Hebrew text has, in the second half of this verse, "and they did not rebel against his word." The sense of the Vulgate is perhaps "and still he kept his worst threat in store"; literally, "he did not (as yet) aggravate his word." The darkness may be understood in the literal sense, of the ninth plague, or figuratively of the blindness which God sent upon Pharaoh and his court.

40 them, that turned to fire in the darkness, lighting their
41 journey. Quails came, when they asked for food; he
satisfied their desire, too, with bread from heaven, and
42 pierced the rock so that water flowed down, running
streams in the wilderness. So well did he remember
43 that holy promise of his, made to his servant Abraham;
44 in joy and triumph he led them out, his chosen people,
and gave them the lands of the heathen for their own.
45 There, on soil Gentile hands had tilled, his command-
ments should be kept sacred, his law should reign.
Alleluia.

PSALM 105

(Alleluia.)

2 **P**RAISE THE Lord, the Lord is gracious; his mercy
endures for ever; what tongue can recount all the
great deeds of the Lord, can echo all his renown?
3 Blessed are they who abide ever by his decrees, ever
4 do the right! Remember us, Lord, with loving
thoughts towards thy people, come and strengthen me
5 with thy aid, to witness the prosperity of thy chosen
servants, to rejoice with thy people that rejoices, to
share the glory of thy own domain.
6 We have taken part in our father's sins; we are

v. 4. The Vulgate has "us" for "me" in this verse.

7 guilty men, rebels against thee. Heedless of the won-
derful things thou hadst done in Egypt, forgetful of
8 thy great mercies, our fathers were already challenging
thee, the most High, at the Red Sea's brink. Yet, for
his own honour, to make known his power, he deliv-
9 ered them, checking the Red Sea, so that it dried up,
and leading them through its bed as safely as if
10 they trod the desert sands. So he rescued them from
that vengeful power, claimed them as his own from
11 the enemy's pursuit, and the water overwhelmed their
12 oppressors, till not one of them was left. They be-
lieved, then, in his promises, sang songs, then, in his
13 honour, but soon they forgot what he had done, and
14 could not wait upon his will. They must needs give
way to their cravings in the wilderness, challenge
15 God's power, there in the desert, till he granted their
will, then sent a wasting sickness to plague them.
16 There was mutiny in the camp against Moses, against
17 Aaron, the Lord's chosen priest; and now earth gaped,
swallowing up Dathan, overwhelming Abiron and his
18 conspiracy; fire broke out in their company, and the
19 rebels perished by its flames. They made a calf, too,
at Horeb, fashioning a golden image and worshipping
20 it, as if they would exchange the glory that dwelt
among them for the semblance of a bullock at grass.
21 So little they remembered the God who had delivered
22 them, those portents of his in Egypt, strange things

v. 15. "Sent a wasting sickness to plague them"; Vg.
"plagued their appetites with satiety."

23 seen in that land of Cham, terrible things done by the
Red Seal What wonder if he threatened to make an
end of them? But Moses, the man of his choice, stood
in the breach to ward off his anger, to save them from
ruin.

24 And now they poured scorn on the land of their
25 desire, distrusting his promise; all was disaffection
in the camp. So the Lord, finding they would not
26 listen to his voice, lifted his hand and threatened to
27 smite them down, there in the wilderness; they should
be lost among the peoples, scattered wide through
28 the world. They dedicated themselves to Beelphegor,
29 offering sacrifice to lifeless things; till their wicked
ways roused God's anger, and a plague fell upon them.
30 Nor might the destruction cease, till Phinees rose up
31 and made amends, winning himself such title to God's
favour as shall be remembered, age after age, eternally.
32 They provoked his anger, too, at the waters of Meriba,
33 so that Moses was punished for their sake; because,
in his heart's bitterness, he broke out into open com-
plaining.

34 Not theirs to root out the heathen, as the Lord had
35 bidden them; they mingled with the heathen instead,
36 and learned their ways; worshipping carved images, to
37 their own undoing, sacrificing their sons and daughters
38 in honour of devils. Innocent blood, the blood of their
own sons and daughters, was poured out in worship to
the idols of Chanaan; with blood the whole land was
39 polluted, so heinous the guilt of its people, so wanton
40 their ways. Then God's anger blazed up against his

- 41 people, his chosen race became abominable to him, and
he handed them over to the Gentiles; despised slaves,
42 they were oppressed by their enemies, bowed down
43 under the yoke. Again and again he brought them
deliverance, but ever there were fresh shifts to provoke
him, there was fresh guilt to drag them in the dust.
44 And still, when he saw their distress, when he heard
45 their appeals to him, the thought of his covenant
46 availed them, in his great mercy he would relent; their
very captors should be moved to pity.
- 47 Deliver us, O Lord our God, and gather us again,
scattered as we are among the heathen, to praise thy
48 holy name, to triumph in thy renown. Blessed be the
God of Israel from all eternity to all eternity; let all
the people cry, Amen, Alleluia.

PSALM 106

(Alleluia.)

- 2 **P**RAISE THE Lord, the Lord is gracious; his mercy
endures for ever; be this the cry of men the Lord
3 has rescued, rescued them from the enemy's hand, and
gathered them in from far-off countries, from sunrising
and sunset, from the north and from the southern
sea.
- 4 Some have wandered in parched deserts, missing the
5 way to the city that was their home, hungry and thirsty,

- 6 so that their spirits died within them. So they cried
out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their
7 distress, guiding them on the right way that led to
8 the city where they dwelt. Praised be the Lord in his
mercies, in his wondrous dealings with mortal men;
9 poor souls that were thirsty, contented now, poor souls
that were hungry, satisfied now with all good.
- 10 Some lay where darkness overshadowed them, help-
11 less in bonds of iron; their punishment for rebelling
against God's decrees, for thwarting the will of the
12 most High. Their hearts bowed down with sorrow,
13 none else to aid their mortal weakness, they cried out
to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their dis-
14 tress, rescuing them from darkness, from the shadows,
tearing their chains asunder.
- 15 Praised be the Lord in his mercies, in his wondrous
16 dealings with mortal men; the Lord who has shat-
tered the gates of brass, riven the bonds of iron.
- 17 Some for their own fault must needs be humbled;
18 must expiate their guilt by lying sick, with no stomach
19 for food, close to death's door. So they cried out to

v. 10. "Where darkness overshadowed them"; Vg. "In darkness, overcast with the shadow of death"; so also in verse 14.

v. 17. In the Hebrew text, "Fools are brought low because of their wrong-doing and of their guilt"; but some think the original word must have been "sick men" instead of "fools." In any case it is clear that this section of the psalm deals with relief in sickness. The Vulgate has, "Some for their own guilt must needs be humbled; from their own guilt's consequence he saved them; (they lay sick) with no stomach for food" . . . etc.

20 the Lord in their trouble, and he relieved their dis-
21 tress, uttered the word of healing, and saved them from
22 their peril. Praised be the Lord in his mercies, in his
wondrous dealings with mortal men; theirs to offer
him sacrifice in thanksgiving, and proclaim joyfully
what he has done for them.

23 There are some that venture abroad in ships, traffick-
24 ing over the high seas; these are men that have wit-
nessed the Lord's doings, his wonderful doings amid
25 the deep. At his word the stormy wind rises, churning
26 up its waves; high up towards heaven they are carried,
then sink into the trough, with spirits fainting at their
27 peril; see them reeling and staggering to and fro as
28 a drunkard does, all their seamanship forgotten! So
they cry out to the Lord in their trouble, and he relieves
29 their distress, stilling the storm into a whisper, till all
30 its waves are quiet. Glad hearts are theirs, when calm
falls about them, and he brings them to the haven
31 where they longed to be. Praised be the Lord in his
mercies, in his wondrous dealings with mortal men;
32 let them extol his name, where the people gather,
glorify him where the elders sit in council.

33 Here, he changes rivers into desert sand, wells into
34 dry ground; land that once was fruitful into a salty
35 marsh, to punish its people's guilt. There, he turns
the wilderness into pools of water, desert ground into
36 springs; and establishes hungry folk there, so that they
37 build themselves a city to dwell in, sow fields, and
38 plant vineyards, and reap the harvest; he blesses them,
so that their numbers increase beyond measure, and

39 takes no toll of their cattle. Once, they were but few,
40 worn down by stress of need and ill fortune; but now
the same power that shames the tyrant and drives
41 him homeless into the desert, has rescued the poor
from need, their households thrive like their own
42 flocks. Honest men will rejoice to witness it, and
43 malice will stand dumb with confusion. Heed it
well, if thou wouldst be wise; be these thy study, the
mercies of the Lord.

PSALM 107

(A song. A psalm. Of David.)

2 **A** HEART to serve thee, O God, a heart ready to serve
thee; its song, its music are for thee. Wake,
3 all my skill, wake, echoes of harp and viol; dawn
4 shall find me watching. Let me give thanks, Lord,
for all the world to hear it, sing psalms while the
5 Gentiles listen, of thy mercy, high above heaven it-
6 self, of thy faithfulness, that reaches the clouds! O
God, mount high above the heavens, till thy glory

v. 39. The arrangement of the sense in the Hebrew is obscure; the Vulgate may perhaps be rendered, "Here, men grow few, worn down by stress of need and ill fortune; scorn overwhelms them now, those proud chieftains, and keeps them wandering in a pathless desert. There, he rescues the poor from need" . . . etc.

vv. 2-6. See Psalm 56, 8-12.

[160]

7 overshadows the whole earth. Now, to preserve those
8 thou lovest, shew thy saving power, listen to my
9 prayer. This is the oracle God has given in his
10 sanctuary: In triumph I will divide up Sichem, and
11 parcel out the valley of Tents; to me Galaad, to me
12 Manasse belongs; Ephraim is my helmet, Juda the
13 staff I bear. Now Moab, too, shall be my drudge; over
14 Edom I will claim my right; I will lead the Philistines
15 away in triumph. Such was the oracle; but now who
16 is to lead me on my march against this fortress, who
17 is to find an entrance for me into Edom, when thou,
18 O God, hast disowned us, and wilt not go into battle
19 with our armies? It is thou that must deliver us from
20 peril; the help of man is vain. Only through God can
21 we fight victoriously; only he can trample our oppres-
22 sors in the dust.

PSALM 108

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.)

2 **G**OD THAT guardest my renown, do not leave me un-
3 befriended; there are malicious lips, treacherous
4 lips, that decry me; whispering against me, hedging
5 me about with a conspiracy of hatred, in unprovoked
6 attack. On their side, all calumny in turn for love,

vv. 7-14. See Psalm 59, 6-14.

- 5 on mine all prayer; kindness is repaid with injury,
love with ill will.
- 6 An ill master let him have, and an accuser ready at
7 his side; let him leave the court of judgement a doomed
8 man, pleading with heaven in vain. Swiftly let his
9 days come to an end, and his office be entrusted to
10 another; orphancy for the children, widowhood for the
11 wife! Driven from a ruined home, to and fro let his
12 children wander, begging their bread, while eager
creditors count his goods, and strangers divide the
13 fruits of his toil. May no friend be left to take his part,
14 none to have pity on his defenceless kin; a speedy end
to his race, oblivion for his name before a generation
15 passes! Still may the sin of his fathers be remembered
in the Lord's sight, his mother's guilt remain indelible;
16 still may the Lord keep it in mind, and wipe out their
memory from the earth. Did he himself keep mercy
in mind, when he persecuted the helpless, the destitute,
the grief-stricken, and marked them down for death?
17 Cursing he loved, and a curse shall come upon him;
for blessing he cared little, and blessing shall keep
18 its distance from him. Cursing shall wrap him about,
sink like water into his inmost being, soak, like oil,
19 into the marrow of his bones! Let it be the garb he

vv. 6-19. It is possible to understand these verses (or *vv. 6-17*) as spoken, not by the Psalmist, but of the Psalmist by his detractors.

v. 6. "An accuser," or perhaps, "An evil spirit."

v. 8. Acts 1:20.

v. 19. *Vg.* "Cursing was the livery of his choice; it sank

wears, cling to him like a girdle he can never take off.
 20 So, in their own coin, may the Lord repay them,
 21 my accusers that defame me so cruelly. But do thou,
 my Lord and Master, take my part, to defend thy own
 22 honour; no mercy is so tender as thine. Deliver me in
 my helpless need; my heart is pierced through with
 23 anguish. Like a dwindling shadow I depart, swept
 24 away like a locust on the wing. My knees are weak
 with fasting, my strength pines away unnourished.
 25 They make a laughing-stock of me, toss their heads in
 26 derision as they pass by. Help me, O Lord my God;
 27 deliver me in thy mercy; prove to them that my woes
 are a visitation from thee, sent by no hand but thine.
 28 Bless me, thou, and let them curse as they will; dis-
 appoint my adversaries, and grant thy servant relief.
 29 Let these, my accusers, be covered with shame,
 30 wrapped in the mantle of their own confusion. Loudly
 will I give the Lord thanks, praise him before multi-
 31 tudes that listen; the Lord who has stood at the right
 hand of the friendless, brought redress to an innocent
 soul misjudged.

like water into his inmost being, soaked, like oil, into the marrow of his bones."

v. 20. The meaning of the Hebrew text is uncertain. The word here taken as meaning "reward" has nowhere else the sense of "punishment." The literal rendering would be "Such are the doings of my accusers," but it is difficult to fit in the words "from the Lord."

v. 24. "Unnourished"; literally, "from oil," either in the sense of "fatness," or because the Psalmist was denying himself the use of oil while keeping a fast.

PSALM 109

(Of David. A psalm.)

TO THE Master I serve the Lord's promise was given,
2 Sit here at my right hand while I make thy enemies
a footstool under thy feet. The Lord will make thy
3 empire spring up like a branch out of Sion; thou art
to bear rule in the midst of thy enemies. From birth,
4 princely state shall be thine, holy and glorious; thou
art my son, born like dew before the day-star rises. The
5 Lord has sworn an oath there is no retracting, Thou
art a priest for ever in the line of Melchisedec. At thy
right hand, the Lord will beat down kings in the day
6 of his vengeance; he will pass sentence on the nations,
heap high the bodies, scatter far and wide the heads of

v. 1. Cf. Mt. 22:44, Mk. 12:36, Lk. 20:42, Acts 2:34.

v. 3. "Princely state shall be thine"; in the Hebrew text, "thy people offers itself willingly." Some would translate the words which follow, "in holy garments"; it is possible that there was a manuscript error, and the original line ran, "upon the holy mountains." The second half of the verse, as it is given in the Hebrew text, is traditionally rendered "the dew of thy birth is of the womb of the morning," a phrase of which many different explanations have been given. The Vulgate renders, "When thou shewest thy power, princely state shall be thine, amid the splendour of the holy places; thou art my son, born before the day-star rises."

v. 4. See Heb. 5:6 and elsewhere.

v. 6. Vg. "He will pass sentence on the nations, and accomplish their ruin; assail a well-peopled land and smite down its princes." Some think the Hebrew words "in the land of many" conceal a proper name, "in the land of Rabba" (capital of Ammon).

- 7 the slain. Now that he has drunk of the brook by the way side, he will lift up his head in victory.

PSALM 110

(Alleluia.)

- A**LL MY heart goes out to the Lord in thanksgiving,
before the assembly where the just are gathered.
2 Chant we the Lord's wondrous doings, delight and
3 study of all who love him. Ever his deeds are high
4 and glorious, faithful he abides to all eternity. Great
deeds, that he keeps still in remembrance! He, the
5 Lord, is kind and merciful. In abundance he fed the
men who feared him, keeping his covenant for ever.
6 Lordly the power he shewed his people, making the
7 lands of the heathen their possession. No act but shews
him just and faithful; of his decrees there is no re-
8 lenting. Perpetual time shall leave them changeless;
9 right and truth are their foundation. So he has brought
our race deliverance; to all eternity stands his covenant.
10 Unutterable is his name and terrible; vain without his
fear is learning. Wise evermore are you who follow it;
yours the prize that lasts for ever.

v. 7. This verse, which has been variously explained, remains wholly obscure.

v. 2. "Delight and study of all who love him"; literally, "searched out by those who delight in them." The Vulgate has, "Decreed to accomplish all his purposes."

PSALM 111

(Alleluia.)

2 **A** BLESSED man is he, who fears the Lord, bearing
3 great love to his commandments. Children of his
4 shall win renown in their country; do right, and thy
5 sons shall find a blessing. Ease shall dwell in his house,
6 and great prosperity; fame shall ever record his bounty.
7 Good men see a light dawn in darkness; his light, who
8 is merciful, kind and faithful. It goes well with the
9 man who lends in pity, just and merciful in his deal-
10 ings. Length of days shall leave him still unshaken;
men will remember the just for ever. No fear shall he
have of evil tidings; on the Lord his hope is fixed un-
changeably. Patient his heart remains and steadfast,
quietly he waits for the downfall of his enemies. Rich
are his alms to the needy; still his bounty abides in
memory. The Lord will lift up his head in triumph;
ungodly men are ill content to see it. Vainly they gnash
their teeth in envy; worldly hopes must fade and
perish.

v. 3. "Ease"; Vg. "Esteem."

v. 4. "His light"; it is not clear whether this refers to the
just man, or to Almighty God.

v. 5. "Just and merciful in his dealings"; or perhaps, "Jus-
tice shall be found in all his pleadings."

v. 9. II Cor. 9:9.

PSALM 112

(Alleluia.)

2 **P**RAISE the Lord, you that are his servants, praise the
3 name of the Lord together. Blessed be the Lord's
4 name at all times, from this day to all eternity; from
5 the sun's rise to the sun's setting let the Lord's name be
6 praised continually. The Lord is sovereign king of all
7 the nations; his glory is high above the heavens. Who
8 is like the Lord our God, so high above us, that stoops
9 to regard both heaven and earth, lifting up the poor
from the dust he lay in, raising the beggar out of his
dung-hill, to find him a place among the princes, the
princes that rule over his people? He gives the bar-
ren woman a home to dwell in, a mother rejoicing in
her children.

PSALM 113A*

(Alleluia.)

2 **W**HEN Israel came out of Egypt, and the sons of
3 Jacob heard no more a strange language, the
Lord took Juda for his sanctuary, Israel for his own
dominion. The seas fled at the sight they witnessed,

* Psalm 113 in the Latin combines Psalms 114 and 115 of the Hebrew text (see note on Psalm 9): Latin 113A, vv. 1-8; Hebrew 114; Latin 113B, vv. 9-26; Hebrew 115.

4 backward flowed the stream of Jordan; up leapt, like
rams, the startled mountains, up leapt the hills, like
5 yearling sheep. What ailed you, seas, that you fled in
6 terror; Jordan's stream, what drove thee back? Why
did you leap up like rams, you mountains, leap up, you
7 hills, like yearling sheep? Let earth thrill at its Master's
presence; it is he that comes, the God of Jacob,
8 who turned the rock into pools of water, the flint-stone
into a springing well.

PSALM 113 B

9 **N**OT to us, Lord, not to us the glory; let thy name
alone be honoured; thy name for mercy, thy
10 name for faithfulness; why must the heathen say,
11 Their God deserts them? Our God is a God that
dwells in heaven; all that his will designs, he executes.
12 The heathen have silver idols and golden, gods which
13 the hands of men have fashioned. They have mouths,
and yet are silent; eyes they have, and yet are sightless;
14 ears they have, and want all hearing; noses, and yet no
15 smell can reach them; hands unfeeling, feet unstirring;
16 never a sound their throats may utter. Such be the end
of all who make them, such the reward of all who trust
17 them. It is the Lord that gives hope to the race of Israel,
18 their only help, their only stronghold; the Lord that
gives hope to the race of Aaron, their only help, their
19 only stronghold; the Lord that gives hope to all who

20 fear him, their only help, their only stronghold. The
Lord keeps us in mind, and grants us blessing, blesses
21 the race of Israel, blesses the race of Aaron; all those
who fear the Lord, small and great alike, he blesses.
22 Still may the Lord grant you increase, you and your
23 children after you; the blessing of the Lord be upon
24 you. It is he that made both heaven and earth; to the
Lord belongs the heaven of heavens, the earth he gives
25 to the children of men. From the dead, Lord, thou
hast no praises, the men who go down into the place
26 of silence; but we bless the Lord, we, the living, from
this day to all eternity.

*PSALM 114**

(Alleluia.)

2 **M**Y HEART is aflame; blessed be the Lord, that hears
3 my entreaty; the Lord, who grants me audience
when I invoke his name. Death's noose about me,
4 caught in the snares of the grave, ever I found distress
and grief at my side, till I called upon the Lord, Save
5 me, Lord, in my peril. Merciful the Lord our God is,
6 and just, and full of pity; he cares for simple hearts,

* Psalm 114 in the Latin is Psalm 116, vv. 1-9 in the Hebrew text.

v. 3. "Death's noose about me, caught in the snares of the grave"; Vg. "Death's pangs about me, overtaken by all the terrors of the grave."

and to me, when I lay humbled, he brought deliver-
 7 ance. Return, my soul, where thy peace lies; the Lord
 8 has dealt kindly with thee; he has saved my life from
 peril, banished my tears, kept my feet from falling.
 9 Mine to walk at ease, enjoying the Lord's presence, in
 the land of the living.

*PSALM 115**

2, 3 **I** TRUSTED, even when most I bewailed my unhappy
 lot; bewildered, I said, Man's faith is false; but thy
 mercies, Lord, have never failed me; what return shall
 4 I make to thee? I will take the cup that is pledge of
 my deliverance, and invoke the name of the Lord upon
 5 it; I will pay the Lord my vows in the presence of all
 6 his people. Dear in the Lord's sight is the death of
 7 those who love him; and am not I, Lord, thy servant,
 born of thy own handmaid? Thou hast broken the
 8 chains that bound me; I will sacrifice in thy honour,

v. 9. Vg. "I will be the Lord's servant henceforward in the land of the living."

* Psalm 115 in the Latin is Psalm 116, vv. 10-19 in the Hebrew text.

vv. 1-3. The sense here is obscure, and much disputed. It is usually supposed that what the Psalmist said comes to an end with verse 2; but it is difficult to see how this could be described as a confident utterance (see II Cor. 4:13), and it seems best to take verse 3, and part or the whole of what follows, as falling within the quotation. In verse 1, the Vulgate has, "I trusted, and trusting found words to utter in my abasement."

- 9 and call on the name of the Lord. Before a throng of
10 worshippers I will pay the Lord my vows, here in the
courts of the Lord's house, here, Jerusalem, in thy heart.

PSALM 116

(Alleluia.)

- 2 **P**RAISE the Lord, all you Gentiles, let all the nations
of the world do him honour. Abundant has his
mercy been towards us; the Lord remains true to his
word for ever.

PSALM 117

(Alleluia.)

- 2 **G**IVE thanks to the Lord; the Lord is gracious, his
mercy endures for ever. Echo the cry, sons of
Israel; the Lord is gracious, his mercy endures for ever.
3 His mercy endures for ever, echo the cry, sons of
4 Aaron; his mercy endures for ever; echo the cry all
5 you who are the Lord's worshippers. I called on the
Lord when trouble beset me, and the Lord listened,
6 and brought me relief. With the Lord at my side, I
7 have no fear of the worst man can do; with the Lord

at my side to aid me, I shall witness the fall of my
8 enemies. Better to trust the Lord than to rely on the
9 help of man; better to trust the Lord than to rely on
10 the word of princes. Let all heathendom ring me
round, see, in the power of the Lord I crush them!
11 They cut me off from every way of escape, but see,
12 in the power of the Lord I crush them! They swarm
about me like bees, their fury blazes up like fire among
thorns, but see, in the power of the Lord I crush them!
13 I reeled under the blow, and had well-nigh fallen,
14 but still the Lord was there to aid me. Who but the
Lord is my protector, my stronghold; who but the
Lord has brought me deliverance?
15 The homes of the just echo, now, with glad cries
16 of victory; the power of the Lord has triumphed. The
power of the Lord has brought me to great honour,
17 the power of the Lord has triumphed. I am reprieved
from death, to live on and proclaim what the Lord has
18 done for me. The Lord has chastened me, chastened
19 me indeed, but he would not doom me to die. Open
me the gates where holiness dwells; let me go in and
20 thank the Lord! Here is the gate that leads to the
Lord's presence; nothing unholy may enter there.
21 Thanks be to thee, Lord, for giving me audience,
22 thanks be to thee, my deliverer. The very stone which
the builders rejected has become the chief stone at the
23 corner; this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous
24 in our eyes. This day is a holiday of the Lord's own

vv. 22, 23. Matt. 21:42.

choosing; greet this day with rejoicing, greet this day
with triumph!

- 25 Deliverance, Lord, deliverance; Lord, grant us days
26 of prosperity! Blessed is he who comes in the name
of the Lord! A blessing from the Lord's house upon
27 your company! The Lord is God; he has restored
hope to us; marshal the procession aright, with a screen
of boughs that reaches to the very horns of the altar.
28 Thou art my God, mine to praise thee, thou art my
29 God, mine to extol thee. Give thanks to the Lord;
the Lord is gracious, his mercy endures for ever.

PSALM 118

- 2 **A**H, BLESSED they, who pass through life's journey
unstained, who follow the law of the Lord! Ah,
blessed they who study his decrees, make him the
3 whole quest of their hearts! As for the wrong-doers,
4 they leave his ways untrodden. Above all else it binds
5 us, the charge thou hast given us to keep. Ah, how
shall my steps be surely guided to keep faith with thy
6 covenant? Attentive to all thy commandments, I go

v. 27. The interpretation of this verse, in the Hebrew text, is uncertain. Some would translate, "Bind the sacrifice with cords, close up to the horns of the altar." The Vulgate has, "Solemnize this day," which evidently supposes an allusion to the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. 23:40).

v. 28. At the end of this verse the Vulgate adds, "Thanking thee for giving me audience, thanking thee, my deliverer."

7 my way undaunted. A true heart's worship thou shalt
8 have, when once thou hast made known thy will. All
shall be done thy laws demand, so thou wilt not for-
sake me utterly.

9 Best shall he keep his youth unstained, who is true
10 to thy trust. Be thou the whole quest of my heart;
never let me turn aside from thy commandments.
11 Buried deep in my heart, thy warnings shall keep
12 me clear of sin. Blessed art thou, O Lord; teach me
13 to know thy will. By these lips let the awards thou
14 makest ever be recorded. Blithely as one that has
15 found great possessions, I follow thy decrees. Bethink-
ing me still of the charge thou givest, I will mark thy
16 footsteps. Be thy covenant ever in my thoughts, thy
words kept in memory.

17 Crown thy servant with life, to live faithful to thy
18 commands. Clear sight be mine, to contemplate the
19 wonders of thy law. Comfort this earthly exile; do
20 not refuse me the knowledge of thy will. Crushed lies
21 my spirit, longing ever for thy just awards. Chastener
of the proud, thy curse lies on all who swerve from thy
22 covenant. Clear me of the reproach I bear, as I was
23 ever attentive to thy claims. Closeted together, princes
plot against thy servant, that thinks only of thy de-
24 crees. Claims lovingly cherished, decrees that are my
counsellors!

25 Deep lies my soul in the dust, restore life to me, as
26 thou hast promised. Deign, now, to shew me thy will,
thou who hast listened when I opened my heart to thee.
27 Direct me in the path thou biddest me follow, and

28 all my musing shall be of thy wonderful deeds. De-
spair wrings tears from me; let thy promises raise me
29 up once more. Deliver me from every false thought;
30 let thy covenant be my comfort. Duty's path my
31 choice, I keep thy bidding ever in remembrance. Dis-
appoint me, Lord, never, one that holds fast by thy
32 commandments. Do but open my heart wide, and easy
lies the path thou hast decreed.

33 Expound, Lord, thy whole bidding to me; faithfully
34 I will keep it. Enlighten me, to scan thy law closely,
35 and keep true to it with all my heart. Eagerly I long
36 to be guided in the way of thy obedience. Ever let
my choice be set on thy will, not on covetous thoughts.
37 Eyes have I none for vain phantoms; let me find life
38 in following thy way. Establish now the truth of thy
39 promise to one that serves and fears thee. Ease me of
the reproach my heart dreads, thou, whose awards are
40 gracious. Each command of thine I embrace lovingly;
do thou in thy faithfulness grant me life.

41 For me too, Lord, thy mercy, for me too the deliv-
42 erance thou hast promised! Fit answer for those who
43 taunt me, that I rely on thy truth. Faithful thy word,
let me not boast in vain; in thy covenant lies my hope.
44 For ever and for evermore true to thy charge thou
45 shalt find me. Freely shall my feet tread, if thy will
46 is all my quest. Fearlessly will I talk of thy decrees
47 in the presence of kings, and be never abashed. Fain
48 would I have all my study in the law I love. Flung
wide my arms to greet thy law, ever in my thoughts
thy bidding.

49 Go not back on the word thou hast pledged to thy
50 servant; there lies all my hope. Good news in my
51 affliction, thy promises have brought me life. Ground
52 down by the scorn of my oppressors, never from thy
53 law I swerve aside. Gracious comfort, Lord, is the
54 memory of thy just dealings in times long past. Great
55 ruth have I to see wrong-doers, and how they abandon
56 thy law. Gone out into a land of exile, of thy cove-
57 nant I make my song. Gloom of night finds me still
58 thinking of thy name, Lord, still observant of thy
59 bidding. Glad is my lot, who have eyes for nothing
60 but thy will.

61 Heritage, Lord, I claim no other, but to obey thy
62 word. Heart-deep my supplication before thee for the
63 mercies thou hast promised. Have I not planned out
64 my path, turned aside to follow thy decrees? Haste
65 such as mine can brook no delay in carrying out all
66 thy bidding. Hemmed in by the snares which sinners
67 laid for me, never was I forgetful of thy law. Harken
68 when I rise at dead of night to praise thee for thy just
69 dealings. How well I love the souls that fear thee, and
70 are true to thy trust! How thy mercy fills the earth,
71 Lord! teach me to do thy will.

72 In fulfilment of thy promise, Lord, what kindness
73 thou hast shewn thy servant! Inspire, instruct me
74 still; all my hope is in thy covenant. Idly I strayed
75 till thou didst chasten me; no more shall thy warnings
76 go unheeded. Indeed, indeed thou art gracious; teach
77 me to do thy bidding. In vain my oppressors plot
78 against me; thy will is all my quest. Inhuman hearts,

71 curdled with scorn! for me, thy law is enough. It
 was in mercy thou didst chasten me, schooling me to
 72 thy obedience. Is not the law thou hast given dearer
 to me than rich store of gold and silver?
 73 Jealous for the handiwork thou hast made, teach me
 74 to understand thy commandments. Joy shall be theirs,
 thy true worshippers, to see the confidence I have in
 75 thy word. Just are thy awards; I know it well, Lord,
 76 it was in faithfulness thou didst afflict me. Judge me
 no more; pity and comfort thy servant as thou hast
 77 promised. Judge me no more; pardon and life for one
 78 that loves thy will! Just be their fall, who wrong me
 79 scornfully; thy law is all my study. Joined to my
 company be every soul that worships thee and heeds
 80 thy warnings. Jealously let my heart observe thy bid-
 ding; let me not hope in vain.
 81 Keeping watch for thy aid, my soul languishes, yet
 82 I trust in thy word. Keeping watch for the fulfilment
 of thy promise, my eyes languish for comfort still de-
 83 layed. Kitchen-smoke shrivels the wine-skin; so waste
 84 I, yet never forget thy will. Knowest thou not how
 short are thy servant's days? soon be my wrongs re-
 85 dressed. Knaves will be plotting against me still, that
 86 are no friends to thy law. Knaves they are that wrong
 me; bring aid, as thy covenant stands unchanging.
 87 Killed I had been if they had had their way, but thy
 88 bidding forsook I never. Kind as thou ever wert, pre-
 serve me; then utter thy bidding, and I will obey.

v. 83. "Kitchen-smoke"; Vg. "Keen frosts."

89 Lord, the word thou has spoken stands ever un-
90 changed as heaven. Loyal to his promise, age after
91 age, is he who made the enduring earth. Long as
time lasts, these shall stand, obeying thy decree, Master
92 of all. Lest I should sink in my affliction, thou hast
93 given thy covenant to be my comfort. Life-giving are
94 thy commands, never by me forgotten. Lend me thy
95 aid, for thine I am, and thy bidding is all my quest. Let
96 sinners go about to destroy me, I wait on thy will. Look
where I may, all good things must end; only thy law
is wide beyond measure.

97 My delight is in thy bidding; ever my thoughts re-
98 turn to it. Musing still on thy commandments, I have
99 grown more prudent than my enemies. More wisdom
have I than all my teachers, so well have I pondered
100 thy decrees. More learning have I than my elders, I
101 that hold true to thy charge. Mindful of thy warn-
102 ings, I guide my steps clear of every evil path. Meek
under thy tuition, thy will I keep ever in view.
103 Meat most appetizing are thy promises; never was
104 honey so sweet to my taste. Made wise by thy law,
I shun every path of evil-doing.

105 No lamp like thy word to guide my feet, to shew
106 light on my path. Never will I retract my oath to give
107 thy just commands observance. Nothing, Lord, but
affliction, never the saving help thou didst promise
108 me? Nay, Lord, accept these vows of mine; teach me

v. 91. "These shall stand"; Vg. "The day keeps its ap-
pointed course."

109 to do thy bidding. Needs must I carry my life in
110 my hands, yet am I ever mindful of thy law. Nearly
the snares of the wicked caught my feet, yet would I
111 not swerve from thy obedience. Now and ever thy
112 covenant is my prize, is my heart's comfort. Now and
ever to do thy will perfectly is my heart's aim.

113 Out upon the men that play traitor to the law I
114 love! Other defence, other stronghold have I none;
115 in thy law I trust. Out of my path, lovers of wrong;
116 I will keep my God's commandments. Only let thy
promised aid preserve me; do not disappoint me of the
117 hope I cherish. Only do thou sustain me in safety,
118 looking ever to thy will. Obey thee who will not, shall
119 earn thy disdain; idle is all their scheming. Outcasts
they are that profane the land with wrong; for me, thy
120 law is enough. Overcome is my whole being with the
fear of thee; I am adread of thy judgements.

121 Protect the justice of my cause; never leave me at the
122 mercy of my oppressors. Pledge thyself still to befriend
123 me; save me from the scorn of my enemies. Pining
away, I look for thy saving help, the faithful keeping
124 of thy promises. Pity thy own servant, and teach him
125 thy decrees. Perfect in thy own servant's heart the
126 knowledge of thy will. Put off the hour, Lord, no
127 more; too long thy commandment stands defied. Pre-
128 cious beyond gold or jewel I hold thy law. Prized be

v. 112. "To do thy will perfectly"; Vg. "To do thy will,
to win thy favour."

v. 120. "Overcome is my whole being"; Vg. "Overcome
my whole being."

every decree of thine; forsworn be every path of evil-doing.

129 Riddles thy decrees are, hard to read, and well my
130 heart heeds them. Revelation and light thy words
131 disclose to the simple. Rises ever a sigh from my lips
132 as I long after thy covenant. Regard and pity me, as
133 thou hast pity for all that love thy name. Rule thou
my path and warn me; never be wrong-doing my
134 master. Rescue me from man's oppression, to wait
135 henceforth on thy bidding. Restore to thy servant the
smile of thy loving favour, and teach him to know thy
136 will. Rivers of tears flow from my eyes, to see thy law
forgotten.

137 So just, Lord, thou art, thy awards so truly given!
138 Strict justice and utter faithfulness inspire all thy
139 decrees. Stung by love's jealousy, I watch my enemies
140 defy thy bidding. Shall not I, thy servant, love thy
141 promises, tested and found true? Still, despised and
142 disinherited, I do not forget thy charge. Stands thy
143 faithfulness eternally, thy law for ever changeless. Sor-
row and distress have fallen on me; in thy command-
144 ment is all my comfort. Sentence eternal is thy decree;
teach me the wisdom that brings life.

145 Thy audience, Lord, my whole heart claims, a heart
146 true to thy trust. To thee I cry, O grant deliverance;
147 I will do all thy bidding. Twilight comes, and I awake
to plead with thee, hoping ever in thy promises.
148 Through the night my eyes keep watch, as I ponder
149 thy sayings. Thine, Lord, to listen in thy mercy, and
150 grant life according to thy will. Treacherous foes draw

151 near, that are strangers to thy covenant. Thou, Lord,
152 art close at hand; all thy awards are true. Taught long
since by thy decrees, I know well thou hast ordained
them everlastingly.

153 Unblessed is my lot; look down and rescue me, that
154 still am mindful of thy law. Uphold my cause, and
155 deliver me; true to thy promise, grant me life. Un-
known thy mercy to the sinner that defies thy bidding.
156 Unnumbered, Lord, are thy blessings; as thy will is,
157 grant me life. Under all the assaults of my oppressors,
158 I keep true to thy charge. Unhappy I, that watch thy
159 warnings to the sinner go unheeded! Up, Lord, and
witness the love I bear thy covenant; in thy mercy bid
160 me live! Unchanging truth is thy word's fountain-
head, eternal the force of thy just decrees.

161 Vexed by the causeless malice of princes, my heart
162 still dreads thy warnings. Victors rejoice not more over
163 rich spoils, than I in thy promises. Villainy I abhor
164 and renounce; thy law is all my love. Votive thanks
seven times a day I give thee for the just awards thou
165 makest. Very great peace is theirs who love thy law;
166 their feet never stumble. Valiantly, Lord, I wait on
167 thee for succour, keeping ever true to thy charge. Van-
quished by great love, my heart is ever obedient to thy
168 will. Vigilantly I observe precept and bidding of thine,
living always as in thy sight.

169 Wilt thou not admit my cry, Lord, to thy presence,
170 and grant me thy promised gift of wisdom? Wilt thou
not countenance my plea, redeem thy pledge to deliver
171 me? What praise shall burst from my lips, when thou

172 makest known thy will! What hymns of thankfulness
this tongue shall raise to the author of all just decrees!
173 Wouldst thou but lift thy hand to aid me, that hold
174 fast to thy covenant! Weary it is, Lord, waiting for
175 deliverance, but thy law is my comfort. When will
thy just award grant redress, that I may live to praise
176 thee? Wayward thou seest me, like a lost sheep; come
to look for thy servant, that is mindful still of thy
bidding.

PSALM 119

(A song of ascents.)

2 **N**OT UNHEEDED I cry to the Lord in the hour of my
distress. Lord, have pity and deliver me from
3 the treacherous lips, the perjured tongue. Perjurer, he
4 will give thee all thy deserts and more; sharp arrows
from a warrior's bow, blazing faggots of broom.
5 Unhappy I, that live an exile in Mosoch, or dwell
6 among the tents of Cedar! Long banished here among

vv. 3, 4. The Hebrews and their neighbours, in taking an oath, used to say, "May the Lord do such and such things to me, and add such and such things, if I break my word." Here, the Psalmist supposes that the broken oath ran, "May the Lord visit me with sharp arrows, and add to them burning coals of broom." For "coals of broom," the Vulgate has "coals that spread desolation."

vv. 5-7. *Vg.* "Unhappy I, that still am doomed to exile, still dwell where Cedar dwells, my heart sick for home!"

- 7 the enemies of peace, for peace I labour, and their cry
is still for battle.

PSALM 120

(A song of ascents.)

- 1 I LIFT up my eyes to the hills, to find deliverance;
2 I from the Lord deliverance comes to me, the Lord
3 who made heaven and earth. Never will he who
4 guards thee allow thy foot to stumble; never fall asleep
5 at his post! Such a guardian has Israel, one who is
6 never weary, never sleeps; it is the Lord that guards
7 thee, the Lord that stands at thy right hand to give
8 thee shelter. The sun's rays by day, the moon's by
night, shall have no power to hurt thee. The Lord
will guard thee from all evil; the Lord will protect
thee in danger; the Lord will protect thy journeying
and thy home-coming, henceforth and for ever.

Among the enemies of peace, for peace I labour; no word of mine but provokes their wanton attack."

v. 6. "Hurt thee"; Vg. (literally) "burn thee." The idea seems to be that of protection from sun-stroke and from "moon-blindness."

vv. 7, 8. The Vulgate renders this passage as a wish, not as a prophecy.

PSALM 121

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

- 2 **W**ELCOME sound, when I heard them saying, We
will go into the Lord's house! And now our
feet are set firmly in these courts of thine, Jerusalem;
3 Jerusalem, built as a city should be built that is one
4 in fellowship. There the tribes meet, the Lord's own
tribes, to give praise, as Israel is ever bound, to the
5 Lord's name; there the thrones are set for judgement,
6 thrones for the house of David. Pray for all that brings
Jerusalem peace! May all who love thee dwell at ease!
7 Let there be peace within thy ramparts, ease in thy
8 strongholds! For love of my brethren and my familiar
9 friends, peace is still my prayer for thee; remembering
the house of the Lord our God, I long for thy happiness.

PSALM 122

(A song of ascents.)

- 2 **U**NTO thee I lift up my eyes, unto thee, who dwellest
in the heavens. See how the eyes of servants are
fixed on the hands of their masters, the eyes of a maid

v. 5. "Thrones for the house of David"; Vg. "Thrones of authority over the house of David."

on the hand of her mistress! Our eyes, too, are fixed
on the Lord our God, waiting for him to shew his
3 mercy. Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy on us;
4 we have had our fill of man's derision. Our hearts can
bear no more to be the scorn of luxury, the derision
of the proud.

PSALM 123

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

2 **I**F THE Lord had not been on our side, Israel may
3 boast, if the Lord had not been on our side when
4 human foes assailed us, it seemed as if they must have
5 swallowed us up alive, so fierce their anger threatened
6 us. It seemed as if the tide must have sucked us down,
7 the torrent closed above us; closed above us the
8 waters that ran so high. Blessed be the Lord, who has
not let us fall a prey to those ravening mouths! Our
lives were saved, like a bird that escapes from the
fowler's snare; the snare is broken now, and we are
safe. We found help in the name of the Lord, who
has made heaven and earth.

vv. 4, 5. Vg. "It seemed as if the tide must have sucked us down when we ventured our lives on that flood; an overbearing tide, and our lives ventured on it!"

PSALM 124

(A song of ascents.)

- 2 **T**HOSE who trust in the Lord are strong as mount
Sion itself, that stands unmoved for ever. The
3 hills protect Jerusalem; so the Lord protects his people,
now and for ever. How should the Lord allow wicked
4 men to bear sway over the innocent, and tempt the
innocent to share in their evil doings? Deal kindly,
5 Lord, with the kindly, with the true-hearted. Who
turns from the right path, shall bear the punishment
of his ill-doing; but upon Israel there shall be peace.

PSALM 125

(A song of ascents.)

- 2 **W**HEN the Lord gave back Sion her banished sons,
we walked like men in a dream; in every mouth
was laughter, joy was on every tongue. Among the
heathen themselves it was said, What favour the Lord
3 has shewn them! Favour indeed the Lord has shewn

vv. 1, 2. *Vg.* "Those who trust in the Lord are strong as Mount Sion itself. Unmoved for ever is he who dwells at Jerusalem; as the hills protect it, so the Lord" . . . etc.

v. 5. "By devious paths"; *Vg.* "Where snares await them."

- 4 us, and our hearts are rejoiced. Deliver us, Lord, from
our bondage; revive our spirits, like a stream that flows
5 in the desert. The men who are sowing in tears will
6 reap, one day, with joy. They go out, weeping as they
go, but with seed to scatter; when they come back, they
will come rejoicing, as they carry their sheaves with
them.

PSALM 126

(A song of ascents. Of Solomon.)

- VAIN is the builder's toil, if the house is not of the
Lord's building; vainly the guard keeps watch,
2 if the city has not the Lord for its guardian. Vain,
that you should be astir before daybreak, and sit on
over your tasks late into the night, you whose bread is
so hardly won; is it not in the hours of sleep that he

v. 4. Some commentators think that the process of deliverance was still incomplete, only a small number of exiles (for example) having returned from captivity; others, that verse 1 expresses not something which had actually happened, but an imaginary picture.

v. 2. Vg. "Vain, that you should be astir before daybreak; rest awhile before you stir abroad, you whose bread is so hardly won; is not sleep his gift to the men he loves?" The verse is not, in any case, an incitement to idleness; the gist of the psalm lies in what follows. What is the use of a house to a childless man, of a well-built city with a dwindling number of inhabitants; what is the use of toiling day and night, unless you have a family to provide for?

- 3 blesses the men he loves? Fatherhood itself is the
Lord's gift, the fruitful womb is a reward that comes
4 from him. Crown of thy youth, children are like
5 arrows in a warrior's hand. Happy, whose quiver is
well filled with these; their cause will not be set aside
when they plead against their enemies at the gate.

PSALM 127

(A song of ascents.)

- 2 **B**LESSED thou art, if thou dost fear the Lord, and
follow his paths! Thyself shall eat what thy hands
have toiled to win; blessed thou art; all good shall be
3 thine. Thy wife shall be fruitful as a vine, in the heart
of thy home, the children round thy table sturdy as
4 olive-branches. Let a man serve the Lord, such is the
5 blessing that awaits him. May the Lord who dwells
in Sion bless thee; mayest thou see Jerusalem in pros-
6 perity all thy life long. Mayest thou live to see thy
children's children, and peace resting upon Israel.

v. 4. "Crown of thy youth"; Vg. "For the disinherited." The mention of "youth" perhaps underlines the advantage of having grown-up sons to a man in his declining years.

v. 5. "Whose quiver is well filled with these"; Vg. "the man who has his heart's fill of these."

v. 3. "As a vine, in the heart of thy home"; Vg. "As the vine that grows on the walls of thy house."

PSALM 128

(A song of ascents.)

2 **O**FTEN have they assailed me from my youth (let
this be Israel's boast); often have they assailed
me even from my youth, but never once outmatched
3 me. I bent my back to the oppressor, and long was
4 the furrow ere the plough turned; but the Lord proved
5 faithful, and cut the bonds of tyranny asunder. Let
them be dismayed and routed, all these enemies of
6 Sion. Let them be like the stalks on a house-top, that
7 wither there unharvested; never will they be grasped
8 in the reaper's hand, or fill the gleaner's bosom, no
passer-by will say, The Lord's blessing on you; we bless
you in the name of the Lord.

PSALM 129

(A song of ascents.)

1,2 **O**UT OF THE depths I cry to thee, O Lord; Master,
listen to my voice; let but thy ears be attentive
3 to the voice that calls on thee for pardon. If thou,

vv. 3, 4. *Vg.* "I bent my back, and sinners mishandled me (literally, played the carpenter); long their tyranny lasted, but the Lord proved faithful, and broke the sinners' necks in pieces."

v. 8. *Cf.* Ruth 2:4.

v. 3. "Keep record"; *Vg.* "Take heed."

Lord, wilt keep record of our iniquities, Master, who
 4 has strength to bear it? Ah, but with thee there is
 5 forgiveness; be thy name ever revered. I wait for the
 6 Lord, for his word of promise my soul waits; patient as
 ever watchman that looked for the day. Patient as
 7 watchmen at dawn, for the Lord Israel waits, the Lord
 with whom there is mercy, the Lord with whom there
 8 is power to ransom. He it is that will ransom Israel
 from all his iniquities.

PSALM 130

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

LORD, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes not raised
 L from the earth; my mind does not dwell on high
 2 things, on marvels that are beyond my reach. Bear

vv. 4-7. Vg. "Ah, but with thee there is forgiveness; I will wait for thee, Lord, as thou commandest. My soul relies on his promise, my soul waits patiently for the Lord. From the morning watch till night has fallen, let Israel trust in the Lord; the Lord, with whom" . . . etc.

v. 2. "Bear me witness that I kept my soul ever quiet," literally, "If I keep my soul quiet"; some such words as "may the Lord punish me for it" being understood. This was a frequent form of oath-taking among the Jews, cf. Ps. 94:11. In the Vulgate, this verse runs: "Bear me witness that mine were humble thoughts, that my soul was never exalted with pride. The thoughts of a child newly weaned towards its mother, this is all my soul knows of recompense," perhaps meaning that the Psalmist has no more thought of making return to God for his favours, than a weaned child has of making return to its mother. The meaning of the Hebrew text is far from certain.

me witness that I kept my soul ever quiet, ever at peace. The thoughts of a child on its mother's breast,
3 a child's thoughts were all my soul knew. Let Israel trust in the Lord, henceforth and for ever.

PSALM 131

(A song of ascents.)

1,2 **L**ORD, remember David, and all his patient care, the oath he swore to the Lord, the vow he made to the
3 great God of Israel: Never will I come beneath the roof of my house, or climb up into the bed that is
4 strewn for me; never shall these eyes have sleep, these
5 eye-lids close, until I have found the Lord a home, the
6 great God of Israel a dwelling-place. And now, at Ephrata, we have heard tidings of what we looked for,
7 we have found it in the plains of Jaar; now to go into
8 his dwelling, pay reverence at his footstool! Up, Lord,

v. 6. Literally, "Behold, we have heard of it at Ephrata, and found it in the plains of the wood (or, of Jaar)." If this psalm was composed for the dedication of Solomon's temple (II Paralip. 6:41, 42) and commemorates the bringing back of the Ark to Jerusalem (I Paralip. 13), we should naturally suppose that "it" means the Ark. It is not clear that the Ark ever rested at Bethlehem-Ephrata; but some think that Ephrata here is another name for Silo (I Kings 4:3), and that the other half of the verse refers to Cariathiarim, the "city of the woods" (I Paralip. 13:5).

v. 7. "His footstool"; Vg. "the place where he halted on his journey."

- and take possession of thy resting-place, thou and the
9 ark which is thy shrine! Let thy priests go clad in the
vesture of innocence, thy faithful people cry aloud with
rejoicing.
- 10 Think of thy servant David, and do not refuse audi-
11 ence to the king thou hast anointed. Never will the
Lord be false to that inviolable oath he swore to David:
12 I will raise to thy throne heirs of thy own body; if
thy sons hold fast to my covenant, to the decrees which
I make known to them, their sons too shall reign on
13 thy throne for ever. The Lord's choice has fallen upon
14 Sion, this is the dwelling he longed for: Here, for
15 ever, is my resting-place, here is my destined home. I
will not fail to bless her with abundant store, the poor
16 shall have bread to their hearts' content. I will clothe
her priests in the vesture of triumph, cries of rejoicing
17 shall echo among her faithful people. There the stock
of David shall bud, there shall a lamp burn continu-
18 ally for the king I have anointed. I will cover his
enemies with confusion; on his brow the crown I gave
shall shine untarnished.

v. 15. "Her"; Vg. "her widows."

v. 17. Literally, "There will I make a horn grow for David, I have trimmed a lamp for my anointed," both metaphors for the continuance of his royal dynasty (III Kings 15:4, Luke 1:69).

v. 18. Vg. "I will cover his enemies with confusion; on his brow my holy unction shall be bright." In the Hebrew text, the verb means rather "to flourish" than "to shine," and "my crown" is "his crown."

PSALM 132

(A song of ascents. Of David.)

- 2 GRACIOUS the sight, and full of comfort, when
brethren dwell united. Gracious as balm poured
on the head till it flows down on to the beard; balm
that flowed down Aaron's beard, and reached the very
3 skirts of his robe. It is as if dew like the dews of
Hermon were falling on this hill of Sion; here, where
the Lord has promised to grant benediction and life
everlastingly.

PSALM 133

(A song of ascents.)

- COME, then, praise the Lord, all you that are the
Lord's servants; you that wait on the Lord's
2 house at midnight, lift up your hands towards the

v. 3. Literally, "like the dew of Hermon that falls on the hill of Sion," which, however, was more than a hundred miles distant. It seems clear, therefore, that the dews of Hermon are only mentioned here as typically of exceptionally heavy dews; unless those authors are right who suspect that the reference is to a mount Sion, differently spelt in Hebrew, which was part of the Hermon range (Deut. 4:48).

v. 1. After the word "house" the Vulgate adds, "In the courts where our God dwells." The words were probably omitted in our present Hebrew text by accident; see next psalm.

- 3 sanctuary and bless the Lord. May the Lord who dwells in Sion bless thee, the Lord who made heaven and earth!

PSALM 134

(Alleluia.)

- 2 **P**RAISE the Lord's name, praise the Lord, you that
3 are his servants, you who stand in the house of
4 the Lord, in the courts where our God dwells. Praise
5 to the Lord, a Lord so gracious, praise to his name, a
6 name so well beloved. Has not the Lord made choice
7 of Jacob, claimed Israel for his own?
8 Doubt it never, the Lord is great; he, our Master,
9 is higher than all the gods. In heaven and on earth,
10 in the sea and in the deep waters beneath us, the Lord
11 accomplishes his will; summoning clouds from the
ends of the earth, turning the lightning into a rain-
storm, bringing winds out of his store-house. He it
was that smote the first-born of the Egyptians, man
and beast alike; what wonders and portents, Egypt,
thou didst witness, sent to plague Pharaoh and all his
servants! He it was that smote nation after nation,
and slew the kings in their pride, Sehon king of the
Amorrhites, and Og the king of Basan, and all the

v. 5. It not clear here who is the speaker; probably the Psalmist makes himself the spokesman of the Jewish people.

12 rulers of Chanaan, and marked down their lands for
a dwelling-place where his own people of Israel should
dwell.
13 Lord, thy name abides for ever; age succeeds age,
14 and thou art ever unforgotten. The Lord defends his
15 people, takes pity on his servants. What are the idols
of the heathen but silver and gold, gods which the
16 hands of men have fashioned? They have mouths,
and yet are silent; eyes they have, and yet are sight-
17 less; ears they have, and want all hearing, never a
18 breath have they in their mouths. Such the end of
all who make them, such the reward of all who trust
19 them. Bless the Lord, sons of Israel, bless the Lord,
20 sons of Aaron, bless the Lord, sons of Levi, bless the
21 Lord, all you that are the Lord's worshippers. Here,
in Jerusalem, his dwelling-place, here, in Sion, let the
Lord's name be blessed.

PSALM 135

(Alleluia.)

2 **G**IVE thanks to the Lord for his goodness, his mercy
is eternal; give thanks to the God of gods, his
3 mercy is eternal; give thanks to the Lord of lords,
4 his mercy is eternal. Eternal his mercy, who does
5 great deeds as none else can; eternal his mercy, whose
6 wisdom made the heavens; eternal his mercy, who

7 poised earth upon the floods. Eternal his mercy, who
8 made the great luminaries; made the sun to rule by
9 day, his mercy is eternal; made the moon and the
 stars to rule by night, his mercy is eternal.

10 Eternal his mercy, who smote the Egyptians by
11 smiting their first-born; eternal his mercy, who de-
12 livered Israel from their midst, with constraining
 power, with his arm raised on high, his mercy is eter-
13 nal. Eternal the mercy that divided the Red Sea in
14 two, eternal the mercy that led Israel through its
15 waters, eternal the mercy that swept Pharaoh and
16 his host into the Red Sea. And so he led his people
 through the wilderness, his mercy is eternal.

17,18 Eternal the mercy that smote great kings, eternal
19 the mercy that slew the kings in their pride, Sehon
20 king of the Amorrites, his mercy is eternal, and Og
21 the king of Basan, his mercy is eternal. Eternal the
 mercy that marked down their land to be a dwelling-
22 place; a dwelling-place for his servant Israel, his mercy
23 is eternal. Eternal the mercy that remembers us in our
24 affliction, eternal the mercy that rescues us from our
25 enemies, eternal the mercy that gives all living things
26 their food. Give thanks to the God of heaven, his
 mercy is eternal.

v. 26. The Vulgate adds, "Give thanks to the Lord of
Lords, his mercy is eternal."

- 2 **W**E SAT down by the streams of Babylon and
 3 wept there, remembering Sion. Willow-trees
 4 grow there, and on these we hung up our harps when
 5 the men who took us prisoner cried out for a song. We
 6 must make sport for our enemies; A stave, there, from
 7 the music they sing at Sion! What, should we sing
 8 the Lord's song in a strange land? Jerusalem, if I
 9 forget thee, perish the skill of my right hand! Let my
 tongue stick fast to the roof of my mouth if I cease
 to remember thee, if I find in aught but Jerusalem the
 fountain-head of my content! Remember, Lord, how
 the sons of Edom triumphed when Jerusalem fell;
 Strip it, they cried, strip it, till never a foundation is
 left to it. Babylon, pitiless queen, blessed be the man
 who deals out to thee the measure thou hast dealt to
 us; blessed be the man who will catch up thy children,
 and dash them against the rocks!

v. 5. The Hebrew text has, "Let my right hand forget."

v. 8. "Pitiless queen"; the Vulgate, following the Hebrew, has, "Poor withered queen."

PSALM 137

(Of David.)

MY HEART's thanks, Lord, for listening to the prayer
I uttered; angels for my witnesses, I will sing
2 of thy praise. I bow down in worship towards thy
sanctuary, giving thanks to thy name for thy mercy and
faithfulness; thy own honour and thy pledged word
3 thou hast vindicated for all the world to see. To thee
I appealed, and thou didst listen to me, didst fill my
4 heart with courage. All the kings of the earth, Lord,
will praise thee now; were not thy promises made in
5 their hearing? Their song shall be of the Lord's do-
6 ings, how great is his renown, the Lord, who is so
high above us, yet looks with favour on the humble,
7 looks on the proud too, but from far off. Though
affliction surround my path, thou dost preserve me;
it is thy power that confronts my enemies' malice, thy
8 right hand that rescues me. The Lord will further all
I take in hand; thy mercy, Lord, endures for ever, and
wilt thou abandon us, creatures of thy own fashioning?

v. 1. The Hebrew word here translated "angels" means, literally, "gods." Some think it refers, as in Psalm 81, to earthly rulers; cf. verse 4 below.

v. 2. The last sentence of this verse is probably corrupt; the Vulgate has, "thou hast exalted thy holy name above all things else"; the Hebrew text, apparently, "thou hast exalted thy word above all thy name."

PSALM 138

(To the choir-master. Of David. A psalm.)

- 1,2 **L**ORD, I lie open to thy scrutiny; thou knowest me,
3 knowest when I sit down and when I rise up
again, canst read my thoughts from far away. Walk
I or sleep I, thou canst tell; no movement of mine but
4 thou art watching it. Before ever the words are framed
5 on my lips, all my thought is known to thee; rear-
guard and vanguard, thou dost compass me about, thy
6 hand still laid upon me. Such wisdom as thine is far
beyond my reach, no thought of mine can attain it.
- 7 Where can I go, then, to take refuge from thy spirit,
8 to hide from thy view? If I should climb up to heaven,
thou art there; if I sink down to the world beneath,
9 thou art present still. If I could wing my way east-
10 wards, or find a dwelling beyond the western sea, still
would I find thee beckoning to me, thy right hand
11 upholding me. Or perhaps I would think to bury
myself in darkness; night should surround me, friend-
12 lier than day; but no, darkness is no hiding-place from

vv. 3-5. Vg. "Thou dost map out the path I take, the lot I inherit, dost foresee all my journeyings, and yet no word of mine spoken. And indeed, Lord, thou knowest all things, new and old; it is thou that hast fashioned me, thy hand that has been laid upon me."

v. 11. "Night should surround me, friendlier than day"; Vg. "Night should be the only witness of my pleasures"; literally, "Night (should be all) my illumination in my pleasures."

thee, with thee the night shines clear as day itself;
light and dark are one.

- 13 Thine are my inmost thoughts. Didst thou not form
14 me in my mother's womb? I praise thee for my won-
drous fashioning, for all the wonders of thy creation.
15 Of my soul thou hast full knowledge, and this mortal
frame has no mysteries for thee, who didst contrive
it in secret, devise its pattern, there in the dark recesses
16 of the earth. All my acts thy eyes have seen, all are
set down already in thy record; my days were num-
bered before ever they came to be.

- 17 A riddle, O my God, thy dealings with me, so vast
18 their scope! As well count the sand, as try to fathom
them; and, were that skill mine, thy own being still
19 confronts me. O God, wouldst thou but make an end
of the wicked! Murderers, keep your distance from
20 me! Treacherously they rebel against thee, faithlessly

vv. 14-16. "I praise thee for thy awful majesty, for the wonders of thy creation, which my own soul must needs acknowledge. This mortal frame has no mysteries for thee, who didst contrive it in secret; all that I am was once hidden in the dark recesses of the earth. Thy eyes looked upon me, when I was yet unformed; all human lives are already written in thy record, brought to birth through the long days when they had no being."

vv. 17, 18. Literally, "How difficult are thy counsels for me (to understand), O God; how vast is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more numerous than the sand; if I should reach the end of them, I am still with thee." The whole passage is probably corrupt; the Vulgate has "thy friends" instead of "thy counsels," and "When I wake up" instead of "if I should reach the end of them."

v. 20. Vg. "You are ever whispering in your hearts, They shall have no advantage from the cities thou gavest them."

- 21 set thee at defiance. Lord, do I not hate the men who
hate thee, am I not sick at heart over their seditions?
22 Surpassing hatred I bear them, count them my sworn
23 enemies. Scrutinize me, O God, as thou wilt, and
read my heart; put me to the test, and examine my
24 restless thoughts. See if on any false paths my heart
is set, and thyself lead me in the ways of old.

PSALM 139

(To the choir-master. A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 **R**ESCUE me, Lord, from human malice, save me
3 from the lovers of oppression, always plotting
treachery in their hearts, always intent on strife,
4 tongues sharp as the tongues of serpents, lips that con-
5 ceal the poison of asps. Preserve me, Lord, from the
power of sinful men, save me from these lovers of
6 oppression who are plotting to trip my feet. What
hidden snares they set for me, these tyrants, what nets
they spread to catch me, what traps they lay in my
path!

- 7 To the Lord I make my appeal, Thou art my God,
8 listen to the voice that pleads with thee. My Lord, my
Master, my strong deliverer, it is thou that shieldest

The sense of this rendering seems to be, that the enemies of Israel are determined not to leave it in peaceful possession of the cities God has given it for an inheritance. Here too the text is probably corrupt.

- 9 my head in the day of battle. Lord, do not let malice
have its way with me, do not prosper its evil designs.
10 They carry their heads high as they close in around
11 me; let their conspiracy prove its own undoing; let
burning coals rain down on them, be they cast into a
12 pit whence they shall rise no more. Not long the
blasphemer's time on earth; misfortune will overtake
13 the oppressor unawares. Can I doubt that the Lord
will avenge the helpless, will grant the poor redress?
14 Honest men will yet live to praise thy name; upright
hearts enjoy the smile of thy favour.

PSALM 140

(A psalm. Of David.)

- 2 **C**OME quickly, Lord, at my cry for succour; do not
let my appeal to thee go unheard. Welcome as
incense-smoke let my prayer rise up before thee; when
I lift up my hands, be it acceptable as the evening sac-
3 rifice. Lord, set a guard on my mouth, post a sentry

vv. 9-12. Vg. "Do not betray my hopes, Lord, into the hands of the wicked; do not forsake me, and let the schemers triumph. This be the fruit of their conspiracy, that all their busy whispering should recoil on themselves. Let burning coals fall upon them; down into the fire thou wilt hurl them, to anguish insupportable. Glib tongues will not always have their way on earth; misfortune will overtake the oppressors and destroy them."

- 4 before my lips; do not turn my heart towards thoughts
of evil, that point the way to wrong-doing; never let
me take part with the oppressors, and share the ban-
5 quet with them. Rather let some just man deal me
heavy blows, this shall be his kindness to me; reprove
me, and it shall be balm poured over me; such unction
never will this head refuse. Their injuries I will still
greet with a prayer. . . .
- 6 . . . My words have won their hearts, a people that had
7 seen their chieftains hurled down the rock-face, a peo-
ple whose bones lie scattered at the grave's mouth, like
seed when the earth is cloven into furrows.
- 8 To thee these eyes look, my Lord, my Master; in
9 thee I trust; let not my life be forfeit. Preserve me
from the ambush they have laid for me, from the
10 snares of the wrong-doers. Into their own nets, sinner
upon sinner, may they fall, and I pass on in safety.

vv. 4, 5. Vg. "Do not turn my heart towards thoughts of evil, to cover sin with smooth names; not mine to mingle with the company they keep. Rather let some just man chastise me, reprove me; never shall the sinner sleek this head with the oil of his flattery. My prayer is still unabated while they have their will." The sense is in any case extremely doubtful.

v. 6. It seems probable, either that this verse is corrupt, or that some passage leading up to it has fallen out. The reference is obscure; some would translate, not "hurled down the rock's face," but "allowed to escape, there by the rock side," understanding an allusion to the occasion when David spared the life of Saul (I Kings 24:1-16, 26:8-20).

v. 7. Vg. "Our bones (that is, the bones of our fellow-countrymen) lie scattered at the grave's mouth, like the ruins of a landslip that has fallen to earth."

v. 10. Vg. "Into his net the sinners shall fall, while I, all unprotected, go safe on my journey."

PSALM 141

(A maskil. Of David, when he was in the cave. A prayer.)

- 2 **L**oud is my cry to the Lord, the prayer I utter for
3 the Lord's mercy, as I pour out my complaint
4 before him, tell him of the affliction I endure. My
heart is ready to faint within me, but thou art watch-
ing over my path. They lie in ambush for me, there
5 by the way side; I look to the right of me, and find
none to take my part; all hope of escape is cut off
6 from me, none is concerned for my safety. To thee,
Lord, I cry, claiming thee for my only refuge, all that
7 is left me in this world of living men. Listen, then,
to my plea; thou seest me all defenceless. Rescue me
8 from persecutors who are too strong for me; restore
liberty to a captive soul. What thanks, then, will I
give to thy name, honest hearts all about me, rejoicing
to see thy favour restored!

v. 5. The Hebrew text is understood by some as meaning, "Look to the right of me, and thou wilt find none to take my part."

v. 8. Vg. "What thanks, then, will I give to thy name! Too long have honest hearts waited to see thee grant me redress."

PSALM 142

(A psalm. Of David.)

- LISTEN, Lord, to my prayer; give my plea a hearing,
as thou art ever faithful; listen, thou who lovest
2 the right. Do not call thy servant to account; what
man is there living, that can stand guiltless in thy
3 presence? See how my enemies plot against my life,
how they have abased me in the dust, set me down in
4 dark places, like the long-forgotten dead! My spirits
5 are crushed within me, my heart is cowed. And my
mind goes back to past days; I think of all thou didst
6 once, dwell on the proofs thou gavest of thy power. To
thee I spread out my hands in prayer, for thee my soul
thirsts, like a land parched with drought.
- 7 Hasten, Lord, to answer my prayer; my spirit grows
faint. Do not turn thy face away from me, and leave
8 me like one sunk in the abyss. Speedily let me win
thy mercy, my hope is in thee; to thee I lift up my
9 heart, shew me the path I must follow; to thee I fly
10 for refuge, deliver me, Lord, from my enemies. Thou
art my God, teach me to do thy will; let thy gracious
spirit lead me on, till I find sure ground under my
11 feet. For the honour of thy own name, Lord, thou
wilt grant me life; in thy mercy wilt rescue me from
12 my cruel affliction. Thou wilt have pity on me, and
scatter my enemies, put an end to all those who are
sworn against my life, the life of thy own servant.

(Of David.)

- B**LESSED be the Lord, my refuge, who makes these
 hands strong for battle, these fingers skilled in
 2 fight; the Lord who pities me and grants me safety,
 who shelters me and sets me at liberty, who protects
 me and gives me confidence, bowing down nations to
 3 my will. Lord, what is Adam's race, that thou givest
 4 heed to it, what is man, that thou carest for him? No
 better than a breath, a passing shadow.
- 5 Bid heaven stoop, Lord, and come down to earth;
 at thy touch, the mountains will be wreathed in smoke.
 6 Brandish thy lightnings, to rout my enemies; shoot thy
 7 arrows, and throw them into confusion! Send down
 thy help from above; save me, rescue me from the
 8 power of alien foes, who make treacherous promises,
 9 and lift their hands in perjury. Then, O my God, I
 will sing thee a new song, on a ten-stringed harp I
 10 will sound thy praise; the God to whom kings must
 look for victory, the God who has brought his servant
 11 David rescue. Save me from the cruel sword, deliver
 me from the power of alien foes, who make treacher-
 ous promises, and lift their hands in perjury.
- 12 So may our sons grow to manhood, tall as the sap-
 lings, our daughters shapely as some column at the turn

vv. 12-15. The Greek and Latin versions seem to suggest
 that the prosperity here described is experienced by the Psalm-

- 13 of a building, it may be, the temple itself. Our garner
full, well stored with every kind of plenty, our sheep
bearing a thousand-fold, thronging the pasture in their
14 tens of thousands, our oxen straining at the load; no
ruined walls, no farewells, no lamenting in our streets.
15 Happy men call such a people as this; and is not the
people happy, that has the Lord for its God?

PSALM 144

(Praises. Of David.)

- A**ND SHALL I not extol thee, my God, my king; shall
I not bless thy name for ever and for evermore?
2 Blessing shall be thine, day after day; for ever and for
3 evermore praised be thy name. Can any praise be
worthy of the Lord's majesty, any thought set limits to
4 his greatness? Down the ages the story of thy deeds
5 is told, thy power is ever acclaimed. Each magnifies
thy unapproachable glory, makes known thy wonders.

ist's enemies, mentioned in verse 11. In that case, the latter half of verse 15 must be understood as instituting a contrast between temporal and spiritual well-being. But it is more likely that verses 12-14 should be taken as loosely depending on verse 15. In that case, the Vulgate will run: "(Happy is their lot) whose sons grow to manhood, tall as the saplings, their daughters fair of form, gaily decked to match the temple itself for beauty. Their garner full to bursting on this side and on that, their sheep bearing plentifully, thronging the pasture-land, sturdy their cattle, no ruined walls, no farewells, no lamenting in their streets."

6 Fearful are the tales they tell of thy power, proclaiming
7 thy magnificence. Grateful their memory of all thy
8 goodness, as they boast of thy just dealings. How
gracious the Lord is, how merciful, how patient, how
9 rich in pity! Is he not a loving Lord to his whole crea-
tion; does not his mercy reach out to all that he has
made?

10 Joining, then, Lord, in thy whole creation's praise,
11 let thy faithful servants bless thee. Let them publish
the glory of thy kingdom, spread the tidings of thy
12 power. Make they that power known to the race of
13 men, the glory, the splendour of that kingdom! No age
shall dawn but shall see thee reigning still; generations
pass, and thy rule shall endure. O how true the Lord is
to all his promises, how gracious in all his dealings!
14 Prostrate though men may fall, the Lord will lift them
up, will revive their crushed spirits.

15 Quietly, Lord, thy creatures raise their eyes to thee,
and thou grantest them, in due time, their nourish-
16 ment. Ready thy open hand to fill with thy blessing
17 all that lives. So faithful the Lord is in all he does,
18 so gracious in all his dealings. The Lord draws near
to every man that calls upon him, will he but call upon
19 him with a true heart. Utter but the wish, you that fear
the Lord, and he will grant it; will hear the cry, and
20 bring aid. Vigilantly the Lord watches over all that
21 love him, utterly destroys the wicked. While these lips

v. 13. The second half of this verse is wanting in the Hebrew text.

tell of the Lord's praise, let all that lives bless his holy name, for ever, and for evermore.

PSALM 145

(Alleluia.)

1,2 **P**RAISE the Lord, my soul; while life lasts, I will
3 praise the Lord; of him, my God, shall my songs
4 be while I am here to sing them. Do not put your
5 trust in princes; they are but men, they have no power
6 to save. As soon as the breath leaves his body, man
7 goes back to the dust he belongs to; with that, all their
8 designs will come to nothing. Happy the man who
9 turns to the God of Israel for help, puts no confidence
10 but in the Lord his God, maker of heaven and earth
and sea and all they contain; the God who keeps faith
for ever, who redresses wrong, and gives food to the
hungry. The Lord, who brings release to the prisoner,
the Lord, who gives sight to the blind, the Lord, who
comforts the burdened, the Lord, who befriends the
innocent! The Lord, who protects the stranger, who
defends orphan and widow, who overturns the coun-
sel of the wicked! The Lord, reigning for ever, thy
God, Sion, reigning from age to age! Alleluia.

PSALM 146*

(Alleluia.)

PRAISE the Lord; the Lord is gracious; sing to our
God, a God who so claims our love; praise is his
2 right. The Lord is rebuilding Jerusalem, is calling the
3 banished sons of Israel home; he it is that heals the
4 broken heart, and binds up its wounds. Does he not
know the number of the stars, and call each by its
5 name? How great a Lord is ours, how magnificent
6 his strength, how inscrutable his wisdom! The Lord
is the defender of the oppressed, and lays the wicked
7 low in the dust. Strike up, then, in thanksgiving to
8 the Lord, with the harp's music praise our God; the
God who curtains heaven with cloud, and lays up a
store of rain for the earth, who clothes the mountain-
9 sides with grass, with corn for man's need, gives food
to the cattle, food to the young ravens that cry out
10 to him. Not the well-mounted warrior is his choice,
11 not the swift runner wins his favour; the Lord's favour
is for those who fear him, and put their trust in his
Divine mercy.

* Psalm 146 in the Latin is Psalm 147, vv. 1-11 in the Hebrew text.

v. 1. Vg. "Praise the Lord, a gracious thing is a psalm; cheerfully and worthily let us give our God praise."

v. 8. The last five words of this verse are wanting in the Hebrew text.

PSALM 147*

1,2 **P**RAISE the Lord, Jerusalem; Sion, exalt thy God! He
it is that bolts thy gates fast, and blesses thy chil-
3 dren, who dwell safe in thee; that makes thy land a
land of peace, and gives thee full ears of wheat to
4 sustain thee. See how he issues his command to the
5 earth, how swift his word runs! Now he spreads a
pall of snow, covers earth with an ashy veil of rime,
6 doles out the scattered crusts of ice, binds the waters
7 at the onset of his frost. Then, at his word, all melts
8 away; a breath from him, and the waters flow! This
is the God who makes his word known to Jacob, gives
9 Israel ruling and decree. Not such his dealings with
any other nation; nowhere else the revelation of his
will. Alleluia.

PSALM 148

(Alleluia.)

2 **G**IVE praise to the Lord in heaven; praise him, all
that dwells on high. Praise him, all you angels
3 of his, praise him, all his armies. Praise him, sun and
4 moon; praise him, every star that shines. Praise him,

* Psalm 147 in the Latin is Psalm 147, vv. 12-20 in the Hebrew text.

v. 5. "Rime"; Vg. "Mist."

v. 6. "Binds the waters at the onset of his frost"; Vg. "Sends the frost there is no enduring."

you highest heavens, you waters beyond the heavens.
 5 Let all these praise the Lord; it was his command that
 6 created them. He has set them there unaging for ever,
 given them a law which cannot be altered.
 7 Give praise to the Lord on earth, monsters of the
 8 sea and all its depths; fire and hail, snow and mist,
 9 and the storm-wind that executes his decree; all you
 10 mountains and hills, all you fruit trees and cedars; all
 you wild beasts and cattle, creeping things and birds
 11 that fly in air; all you kings and peoples of the world,
 12 all you that are princes and judges on earth; young
 13 men and maids, old men and boys together; let them
 all give praise to the Lord's name. His name is exalted
 as no other, his praise reaches beyond heaven and
 14 earth; and now he has given fresh strength to his
 people. Shall not his faithful servants praise him, the
 sons of Israel, the people that draw near to him?

P S A L M 149

(Alleluia.)

2 **S**ING THE Lord a new song; here, where the faithful
 gather, let his praise be heard. In him, the maker
 of Israel, let Israel triumph; for him, the ruler of Sion,
 3 let Sion's children keep holiday; let there be dancing

v. 7. "Mist"; Vg. "Ice."

[212]

in honour of his name, music of tambour and of harp,
4 to praise him. Still the Lord shews favour to his people,
still he relieves the oppressed, and grants them victory.
5 In triumph let thy faithful servants rejoice, rejoice and
6 take their rest. Ever on their lips they bear the high
praise of God, ever in their hands they carry two-
7 edged swords, ready to take vengeance upon the
8 heathen, to curb the nations, to chain kings, and bind
9 princes in fetters of iron. The doom written against
these, with pride his servants execute. Alleluia.

PSALM 150

(Alleluia.)

2 **P**RAISE God in his sanctuary, praise him on his sov-
3 ereign throne. Praise him for his noble acts, praise
him for his surpassing greatness. Praise him with the
bray of the trumpet, praise him with harp and zither.
4 Praise him with the tambour and the dance, praise
5 him with the music of string and of reed. Praise him
with the clear note of the cymbals, praise him with the
cymbals that tell of gladness. Let every thing that
breathes praise the Lord. Alleluia.

THE SONG OF MOSES

Exodus 15:1-18

(Then Moses and the Israelites sang praise to the Lord, and this was their song:)

- 2 **A** PSALM for the Lord, so great he is and so glorious;
Lord is my protector and my stronghold, who but he
has brought me deliverance? Shall I not praise him, my
own God, shall I not extol him, the God of my father
3 before me? Javé, the warrior God, Javé, whose very
4 name tells of omnipotence! And now he would hurl
Pharao's chariots, Pharao's army, into the sea; drowned
5 in the Red Sea, the flower of all his chivalry; the depths
closed over them, and they sank to the bottom like a
6 stone. How magnificent, Lord, is the strength of thy
right hand; that right hand which has shattered the
7 enemy! The power that defied thee was overwhelmed
by thy triumphant onslaught; the hot breath of thy
8 anger burnt them up like stubble. The waters were
piled high through the blast of thy fury; the waves
were still; at the sea's heart the depths congealed.
9 After them, seize them! the enemy cried; there will
be spoil for all to their heart's content; now to un-
10 sheathe my sword, fill my hands with spoil! A breath
from thee, and the sea closed over them; they sank in
11 the raging waters like lead. What power is there, Lord,
that can match thee? Who, as thou art, is august in

v. 2. "My stronghold"; Vg. "The pride of my song."

- holiness, who so worthy of fear and praise, who so
12 wonderful in his doings? Thou hadst but to stretch
out thy hand, and the earth swallowed them up.
- 13 Then, in thy mercy, thou who hadst ransomed thy
people wouldst also be their guide; it was thy power
that brought them on their way to the holy place where
14 thou dwellest. Nations went up, trembling, to their
15 strongholds; despair came on Philistia's citizens, the
chieftains of Edom were dismayed, the warriors of
Moab overcome with fear, faint of heart were all that
16 dwelt in Chanaan. Terror and dread must needs fall
upon them; still as a stone, under the threat of thy
powerful arm, they must watch thy people go by, the
people thou hast chosen for thyself go by as they
17 would. Thy people brought within their borders, thy
people established on the mountain thou claimest for
thy own, the dwelling-place, Lord, thou hast made for
thyself, the sanctuary thy own hands have fashioned!
18 The reign of the Lord will endure for ever and ever.

THE SONG OF MOSES

Deuteronomy 32:1-43

- 2 **L**ISTEN, you heavens, while I have my say; earth, be
attentive to the words I utter; here is teaching big
with import as the rain, here are warnings that must

vv. 13-17. Some of the verbs in this passage are given in the future tense by the Vulgate.

v. 14. "Trembling"; Vg. "Chafing with anger."

- soak in like the dew, wholesome as showers are to the
3 grass, as moisture to the growing crops. The renown
of the Lord shall be my theme; to our God belongs
4 majesty; the God who shelters us, how perfect is all
he does, how right are all his dealings! God, faithful
5 and unerring, God, holy and just! And these, his sons,
have defied him, degenerate sons, a people of false aims
6 and rebellious will. What, reckless still, inconsiderate
still! Is this the return thou wouldst make to the father
7 who begot thee, the creator who fashioned thee? Cast
thy mind back to old days; nay, trace the record of
each succeeding generation; ask thy father what news
he has to tell, thy elders what word they have for
8 thee. The Ruler of all has divided the nations apart,
sundering Adam's children and giving to each people
its own home, peoples as numerous as the sons that
9 sprang from Israel; but one was the Lord's treasured
possession, his own people; it was Jacob he had marked
out for his own domain.
- 10 He sought them out in the wilderness, there in the
echoing spaces of the desert, cherished and cared for
them, guarded them as if they had been the apple of
11 his eyes. (So the eagle that would incite its young to
venture in the air now hovers over them, now spreads
its wings and carries them at rest on its feathers).

v. 5. Vg. "And these, his sons, are lost to him, his sons no longer in their defilement, a generation of false aims and rebellious will."

v. 8. According to the Jewish authors, there were then seventy nations in the world, as Jacob had seventy sons when he went into Egypt (Gen. 44:27).

- 12 None but the Lord was their guide on that journey;
there was no alien god to be found then in their com-
13 pany. So he brought them to a country of high hills,
where they could eat the food their own lands yielded.
Honey oozed from its rocks, on its barren uplands the
14 olive could flourish; cheese from the herd, milk was
theirs from the flock, the flesh of well-fed lamb and
ram, cattle of Basan's breed, and he-goats; they ate the
choicest wheat, drank the heady juice of the grape.
- 15 A people so well loved! Pampered now and full-
fed, they would throw off the yoke like pampered cat-
tle. Pampered thou wert as a stalled ox, grown wanton
with good living. They forsook that Divine creator,
16 revolted against their strong deliverer. He must en-
dure the rivalry of alien worship, look on indignantly
17 at their detestable doings. To gods that were no gods,
but devils, they offered sacrifice; gods untried, upstart
gods of yesterday, whom their fathers never held in
18 awe. What, forsake the sheltering Power that gave
thee birth, forget the very Lord who created thee? The
19 Lord was roused to anger when he saw it, saw his own
sons and daughters defying him. I will turn away
20 from them, he said, and see what comes of it; here
21 is an unnatural race, a faithless brood. They have
deserted me for a god that was no god, phantoms have
been my rivals; now I will desert them in my turn,
for a people that is no people of mine; their rivals shall
be men as impious as themselves.
- 22 My anger shall be like a raging fire that burns down
to the depths of the abyss, that consumes earth and all

- 23 earth yields, scorches the very roots of the hills. I mean
to heap all my plagues upon them, exhaust all the
24 arrows of my vengeance. Famine shall waste them,
fever and cruel pestilence devour them; I will send
wild beasts, too, to prey on them, poisonous serpents
25 shall creep on them through the dust. Havoc with-
out, terror within doors; for man and maid, for infancy
26 and old age, the same doom! Indeed, I had thought
to make away with them altogether, blot out their very
27 name from all human remembrance; but no, I held
my hand; were those enemies of theirs to find room
for boasting? Were rival nations to misread the les-
son, and think it was their own power, not mine, that
had won the day?
- 28 Poor Israel, lost to right judgement, slow of dis-
cernment! If only they would take thought, they
29 would learn better, and foresee what is coming. When
30 they see their thousands put to rout by one man, ten
thousand fleeing with two men in pursuit, can they
doubt that their own God has relinquished them, that
the Lord himself has given their enemy the mastery?
- 31 That enemy himself will bear witness that his gods
32 are no match for this God of ours. Does he enjoy my

v. 24. Vg. "What famine shall gnaw them, what winged
terrors eat them up with destructive fangs! I will send wild
beasts" . . . etc.

v. 27. "Find room for boasting"; Vg. "Provoke me with
taunts."

v. 32. "Does he enjoy my favour? No, says the Lord";
these words are not expressed in the original, but have to be
supplied if we are to understand the train of thought.

favour? No, says the Lord, he is but a wild vine, such
as grows in Sodom, or in the purlieus of Gomorrha,
33 yielding grapes like gall, clusters of bitterness, yielding
wine like the adder's venom, the rankling poison of
34 the viper. Be sure that I keep the record of his wicked-
ness stored away under seal in my treasure-house;
35 vengeance is for me, I will repay when the time comes.
A slip of the foot, and ruin is upon them; their doom
is close at hand.

36 Never doubt it, the Lord will give his people redress,
will take pity on his servants, when he sees their
strength so spent, the number of them so dwindled,
37 whether bond or free. He will ask, What has become
38 of those gods of yours, once so well trusted, that shared,
once, the fat of your victims, the wine you poured in
libation? Will they not bestir themselves, and come
39 to your aid, protect you in your hour of need? Now
you shall learn that I alone am God; there are no
others to rival me; it is mine to kill and to quicken,
mine to smite and to heal; from my power there is
40 no deliverance. See, I lift up my hand, and swear
41 by my own eternal being that I am whetting this bright
sword of mine, to execute speedy judgement; I mean
to take vengeance, now, on my enemies, requite them
42 for all their malice. Now to glut my arrows with their
blood, now to flesh this sword of mine with the slaugh-
ter of the enemy's chieftains, slain in battle or slain as

v. 42. "The enemy's chieftains, slain in battle or slain as captives"; Vg. "My enemies, warriors slain in battle and un-
helmeted captives."

- 43 captives! Do honour, you nations, to the Lord's people; he means to avenge the blood of his servants, to punish their enemies, to be reconciled once again with the land and the people that are his.

THE SONG OF ANNA

I Kings 2:1-10

(And Anna made this prayer which follows:)

- M**Y HEART thrills with joy in the Lord; pride in the God I worship lifts high my head; now I can
2 flout my enemies, happy in thy gift of redress! Who so holy as the Lord? None, there is none else; there
3 is no stronghold can compare with our God. Boast no more, boast no more; those lips must talk in a humbler strain; the Lord God is all-knowing, and weighs all
4 the actions of men. See how he breaks the great warrior's bow, girds the feeble with strength; how the
5 rich, for very need, must work as hirelings, while hungry men keep holiday! See how the barren womb
6 seven times gives birth, and the fruitful mother has none to support her now! Lord of life and death, he
7 brings men to the grave and back from the grave; Lord of poverty and wealth, he alone humbles, alone exalts,
8 raising up the poor man out of the dust, the beggar from his dung-hill, to sit among princes and reach the honours of a throne. It is the Lord that poised the round world on its foundations, and holds them in his

- 9 keeping; safely his friends journey, low lie his enemies
in the darkness; there is no protection for man in
10 man's strength. The Lord will crush his adversaries;
hark, how his thunders roll above them in heaven!
The Lord will sit in judgement on the remotest peoples
of earth, granting dominion and a sceptre of majesty
to the king he has anointed.

SONG OF DAVID

I Paralipomenon 29:10-13

(And David sang the Lord this hymn of praise, there
before the people.)

- BLESSED art thou, O Lord, the God of our father
Israel, blessed from the beginning to the end of
2 time. Thine, Lord, the magnificence, thine the power,
splendour and glory and majesty are thine; to thee all
that is in heaven, all that is on earth, belongs, to thee
the kingdom, and the prince that is without peer.
3 Riches and honour come from thee; all things obey
thy will; from thee power comes and dominion; only
4 thy hand exalts, only thy hand makes strong. To thee,
then, we pay homage this day, to thy glorious name
bring renown.

SONG OF TOBIAS*

Tobias 13:1-9

- B**LESSED be the Lord who reigns for ever, whose kingdom cannot fail. His to scourge, his to pity; he brings men to the grave and back from the grave;
- 2 from his power there is no deliverance. Make known his fame, sons of Israel, for the Gentiles to hear; far and wide his own will has scattered us among them.
- 3 Here, then, proclaim his greatness, tell of his praise so that all who live may listen. Is he not our Lord and
- 4 God, is he not our father everlastingly? What though he scourge us for our sins? He will relent, and restore
- 5 you from your exile in many distant lands. Only come back to him, with heart and soul giving him unfeigned service; he will turn towards you, and hide
- 6 his face no more. Think, what blessings he has in store for you; filled be every mouth with praise, as you bless the Lord, the ever faithful, as you chant in his honour, king of all the ages.
- 7 I at least, in this land of exile, am the spokesman of his praise, herald of his power, his greatness, to a race of sinful men. Come back, sinners, and do his

* The version of this song given in the Vulgate is substantially different. Verses 4-7 run as follows:

What meant he, when he scattered you among nations that know nothing of him, but that you should proclaim there his marvellous deeds, should teach men that he alone is God omnipotent? What though he scourge us for our sins? In his mercy, he will grant deliverance. See what blessings he has given us; give thanks to him with reverent awe; extol by every act of yours the king of all ages.

- will; who knows but he will look on you with favour,
8 and shew mercy to you? My God, heaven's king, shall
I not chant his praises? Shall greatness like his never
thrill my heart?

THE SONG OF JUDITH

Judith 16:15-21

- A HYMN, a new hymn, I will sing to the Lord my
God. Great and glorious, Lord, thou art; there is
2 no outmatching thy wondrous power. Let all thy
creatures do thee service; were they not made at thy
word, fashioned by a breath from thee? When thou
3 commandest, none but must obey. Rain-swept, the
mountains quake from their depths, the rocks melt like
wax, at thy coming.
- 4 Yet art thou merciful to all that fear thee; little is
every victim that tempts thy nostrils, little to thee
every rich burnt-sacrifice; great is he who fears the
Lord, in all his doings great.
- 5 Woe to the nations that levy war on my people;
when the time comes for judgement, the Lord of hosts
will execute vengeance on them. Their flesh the fire
shall scorch, the worm shall devour; lament they must
and bear their pain for ever.

v. 8. Vg. "Here at least, while I live, is a soul that finds content in him."

v. 4. Of this verse, the Vulgate omits all but the first nine words and the last twelve.

v. 5. "Lament"; Vg. "Burn."

THE SONG OF ECCLESIASTICUS

Ecclesiasticus 36:1-16

1,2 **L**ORD OF ALL, be merciful, and look towards us; strike
3 terror into all the nations; raise thy threatening
hand, and shew the Gentiles how strong thou art.
4 They, in our punishment, have seen proof of thy holiness; let us, in their downfall, see proof of thy power;
5 so learn they, as we have learned, that thou, Lord,
6 alone art God. Renew thy portents, as of old, shew
7 once more thy marvellous power; let that hand, that
8 uplifted arm of thine, win fresh renown! Roused be
9 thy anger, widespread thy vengeance; away with the
10 enemy, death to the hateful breed! Delay no more;
put a term to their ignorance, and set them talking of
11 thy wonderful doings. Cut off by the avenging fires
from all escape, swift be their ruin, the oppressors of
12 thy people; crush the tyrants in their pride, who boast
13 that power save theirs is none. Gather Israel's tribes
14 once more, and give them domains as of old. Lord,
have pity on the people that bears thy name, Israel,
15 long since acknowledged thy first-born son; have mercy
on Jerusalem, the holy city thou hast chosen for thy
16 dwelling-place; let Sion echo with thy praise, thy
temple be filled with the brightness of thy presence.

THE SONG OF ISAIAS

Isaias 12:1-6

(When that day comes, thou wilt find thyself saying:)

2 I THANK thee, Lord, who wast once so angry with me; now the storm has passed over, and thou hast brought me consolation instead. God is here to deliver me; I will go forward confidently, and not be afraid; source of my strength, tower of my defence, the Lord has made himself my protector.

3 (So, rejoicing, you will drink deep from the fountain of deliverance; singing, when that day comes:)

4 Praise the Lord, and call upon his name, tell the story of his great doings among all the nations, proclaim his high renown. Sing in honour of the great deeds the Lord has done, make them known for all the world to hear. Cry aloud in praise, people of Sion; great is the holy One of Israel, that dwells among you.

SONG OF EZECHIAS

Isaias 38:10-22

2 IT SEEMED as if I must go down to the gates of the world beneath, in the noon-tide of my years, the remnant of life that I hoped for, hoped for in vain. No

v. 2. "Tower of my defence"; Vg. "Theme of my song." This verse is a quotation from Ex. 15:2.

- more (thought I) to lift my eyes to the Lord God in
this land of the living, to see men's faces, my neigh-
3 bours in mortality, no more! This familiar world
taken away from me, folded up like a shepherd's tent,
my life cut short like the weaver's thread, cut from
4 the warp! No rest is mine night or day; the dawn
comes, and finds me still lamenting; he racks my bones
5 with a lion's fury, day and night, no rest. My voice
is feeble as the voice of nestling swallow or murmur-
ing dove; my eyes wearied out with ever straining
upwards. Lord, I am in hard straits; win release for
me!
- 6 How shall I thank him? Life promised me, and the
promise made good! Bitterness of soul is passed; I
7 shall live out my years. Life is theirs who win the
Lord's protection, and I, among these, shall have my
fill of life and breath; thou hast healed me, saved me
8 from death! All the bitterness turned to confidence;
thou hast rescued me from the snare of death, turned
9 thy back on the record of my sins. Thou hast no praise
in the world beneath, death cannot honour thee; those
who go down to the grave have no promises of thine
10 to hope for; it is living men, as I am a living man

vv. 6 and 7, with the first half of verse 8, are of doubtful interpretation in the Hebrew. The Vulgate has: "And yet, what words can I use, what answer can I expect, when it is he himself that has brought this upon me? With bitter heart I pass all my years in review. Lord, so frail a thing is life; on so little does my mortal breath depend! Thou canst chastise me, thou canst make me live. Bitter, bitter the discipline that brings me peace!"

- 11 to-day, that give thee thanks, pass on from father to son the story of thy faithfulness. The Lord is my saviour still; while life lasts, the Lord's house shall ring with the music of my psalms.

THE SONG OF ISAIAS

Isaias 45:15-26

- 2 **T**RULY, God of Israel, our Saviour, thou art a God
3 of hidden ways! All his enemies must needs be
4 disappointed, the makers of false gods go away
5 ashamed and abashed. Israel has found deliverance
6 in the Lord, eternal deliverance; while ages last no
7 shame, no disappointment for you. The Lord has pronounced it, the Lord God who made the heavens, and the whole frame and fashion of earth; he did not create it to lie idle, he shaped it to be man's home. And he says, My name is Javé, there is no other to rival me; it was not in secret, not in some dark recess of earth, that the word was spoken. It was not in vain that I bade the sons of Jacob search for me; I am the Lord, faithful to my promises, truthful in all I proclaim. Gather yourselves and come near, flock together to my side, heathen men that have found deliverance. They are fools, that lift up wooden images of their own fashioning, and pray to a god who cannot save. Tell us your thoughts, come, take counsel among yourselves; who was it that proclaimed this from the first, prophesied it long ago? Was it not I, the Lord? There

is no God where I am not. Was it not I, the faithful
8 God? There is no other that can save. Turn back to
me, and win deliverance, all you that dwell in the
remotest corners of the earth; I am God, there is no
9 other. I swear it by my own honour; from my lips
comes the true promise there is no recalling, that every
knee shall bow before me, and every tongue swear by
10 my name. Of me it shall be said that redress and
dominion come from the Lord only; all those who
rebelled against him shall appear in his presence
11 abashed. Through the Lord, the whole race of Israel
shall be righted and brought to honour.

THE SONG OF JEREMY

Jeremias 31:10-14

LISTEN, Gentiles, to the Lord's promise; his word must
go out to the islands that are far away; word that
he who scattered Israel will gather Israel in, will guard
2 it faithfully as a shepherd guards his flock. The Lord
means to ransom Jacob, to grant deliverance from the
3 tyrant's power. The exiles will return, greeting mount
Sion with cries of gladness; thronging in to take pos-
session of the Lord's gifts, corn and wine and oil, in-
crease of flock and herd. Revived their spirits shall be,
like a garden when the stream flows full; they shall
4 pine away no more. Glad the maidens shall dance,
gladness there shall be for young and old alike; I will

- 5 turn all their sorrow into joy, comfort and cheer their
sad hearts. Full-fed my priests shall be with dainties;
blessings my people shall have till they ask no more.

THE SONG OF THE THREE YOUNG MEN

Daniel 3:52-88

I

- B**LESSED art thou, Lord God of our fathers, praised
and renowned above all for ever; blessed is thy
holy and glorious name, praised and renowned above
2 all for ever. Blessed art thou, in the temple where thy
glory dwells apart, praised above all, renowned above
3 all for ever; blessed art thou, reigning on thy kingly
throne, praised above all, renowned above all for ever.
4 Blessed art thou, who art throned above the cherubim,
and gazest down into the depths, praised and re-
5 nowned above all for ever. Blessed art thou in the
vault of heaven, praised and renowned for ever.

II

- Bless the Lord, all things the Lord has made, praise
2 and extol his name for ever. Bless the Lord, you, the
3,4 Lord's angels; bless the Lord, you heavens. Bless the
5 Lord, waters above the heavens; bless the Lord you,
6,7 the Lord's armies. Bless the Lord, sun and moon, bless

8 the Lord, stars of heaven. Bless the Lord, each drop
9 of rain and moisture; bless the Lord, all you winds.
10,11 Bless the Lord, fire and heat; bless the Lord, cold and
12,13 winter. Bless the Lord, dew and rain, bless the Lord,
14 frost and the cold air. Bless the Lord, rime and snow,
15,16 bless the Lord, day-time and night-time. Bless the
17 Lord, light and darkness; bless the Lord, lightnings
and storm-clouds.

18 Let earth, too, bless the Lord, praise him and extol
19 his name for ever. Bless the Lord, mountains and
20 hills; bless the Lord, every growing thing that earth
21,22 yields. Bless the Lord, flowing fountains; bless the
23 Lord, seas and rivers. Bless the Lord, sea-monsters and
24 all life that is bred in the waters; bless the Lord, all
25 you birds that fly in heaven. Bless the Lord, wild
beasts and tame; praise him and extol his name for
ever.

26,27 Bless the Lord, you sons of men; and most let Israel
28 bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, you, the Lord's priests;
29,30 bless the Lord, you, the Lord's servants. Bless the
31 Lord, spirits and souls of all faithful men; bless the
32 Lord, dedicated and humble hearts. Well may Ana-
nias, Azarias and Misael bless the Lord, praise him
and extol his name for ever.

v. 11. "Cold and winter"; Vg. "Cold and heat" (probably
by an error of transcription).

THE SONG OF HABACUC

Habacuc 3:2-19

(A prayer. Of the prophet Habacuc. To sad music.)

- 2 I HAVE heard, Lord, the tale of thy renown; I have
seen a vision, Lord, of the power thou hast. Reveal
that power in these latter days, in these latter days
make it known once more! And though we have
earned thy anger, bethink thee of mercy still.
- 3 God coming near from Theman, the holy One from
yonder hills of Pharan! See how his glory overspreads
4 heaven, his fame echoes through earth; the brightness
that is his, like light itself, the rays that stream from
5 his hand, masking his strength; pestilence his out-
6 rider, the wasting sickness in his train! Does he halt?
Then earth trembles. Does he look about him? The
nations are adread. Rocked the everlasting mountains,
bowed down the ancient hills, his own immemorial
7 pathway, as he goes. I see the Ethiop quail in his tent,
the dwellings of Madian astir with terror.
- 8 Is it the rivers, Lord, that have awaked thy anger;
should it be the rivers? Or is it the sea has earned
thy vengeance, that thou comest thus mounted on thy

v. 5. Vg. "Death his outrider, the accusing angel in his train."

v. 6. "Does he halt? Then earth trembles"; Vg. "He stood still, and scanned (literally, measured) the earth."

v. 7. "The Ethiop quail"; Vg. "The Ethiop (tremble) for his sins."

- 9 horses, on thy chariot that crushes all before it; bearest
thy bow stripped from its case, thy quiver so full of
10 arrows? Earth is torn into ravines; the mountains
tremble at the sight. Fierce falls the rain-storm, loud
11 the ocean roars; the sun forgets to dawn in splendour,
the moon lingers in her bower, so bright thy arrows
volley, with such sheen of lightning glances thy
spear.
- 12 Nay, if thou ridest through the world so angrily,
13 crushing the nations in thy disdain, it is to rescue thy
own people, rescue thy own anointed servant, that
thou goest out to battle. Down fall the battlements
14 in yonder castle of godlessness, down sink the founda-
tions to their very base; thrust through with thy spear
are the heads of great warriors, eager now to over-
throw me, confident now as some petty tyrant who
15 oppresses the poor in secret; down into the sea thou
dost hurl his chariots, sucked down by the ooze be-
neath its waves.

v. 9. "Thy quiver so full of arrows"; Vg. "Such was the promise thou hadst made to the nations (literally, tribes)," perhaps with a reference to Gen. 9:13.

vv. 10, 11. "Loud the ocean roars; the sun forgets to dawn in splendour, the moon lingers in her bower"; Vg. "The depths beneath us roar aloud; the heights beckon from above; sun and moon linger in their dwelling-place."

v. 13. "Rescue thy own people, rescue thy own anointed servant"; Vg. "Rescue thy people, march with thy anointed servant to their rescue."

v. 14. "Thrust through with thy spear are the heads of great warriors, eager now to overthrow me"; Vg. "Thy curse lay on the enemy's companies, (on the) heads of his warriors, as they came like a whirlwind to overthrow me."

- 16 Such was the tale that set my whole frame trem-
bling; at the rumour of it I cried out in fear; there
was a faintness overcame my whole being, my steps
faltered as I went. Now with tranquil heart I await
17 this day of doom; upon the enemies of our people it
is destined to fall. What though the fig-tree never
bud, the vine yield no fruit, the olive fail, the fields
bear no harvest; what though our folds stand empty
18 of sheep, our byres of cattle? Still I will make my
boast in the Lord, triumph in the deliverance God
19 sends me. The Lord, the ruler of all, is my strong-
hold; he will bring me safely on my way, safe as the
hind whose feet echo already on the hills.

*SONG OF THE BLESSED
VIRGIN MARY*

Luke 1:46-55

- 1,2 **M**Y SOUL magnifies the Lord; my spirit has found
3 joy in God, who is my Saviour, because he has
looked graciously upon the lowliness of his handmaid.

v. 16. "There was a faintness overcame my whole being; my steps faltered as I went. Now with tranquil heart I await this day of doom; upon the enemies of our people it is destined to fall"; Vg. "Now let wasting disease penetrate, if it will, this frame, rage in me, head to foot; none the less I will keep a tranquil heart when this day of doom comes, gird myself, with the rest of my people, for the march."

v. 19. The Vulgate adds, "A psalm in my mouth for him"; apparently it has mistaken a musical direction in the original for part of the song's text.

Behold, from this day forward all generations will
4 count me blessed; because he who is mighty, he whose
5 name is holy, has wrought for me his wonders. He
has mercy upon those who fear him from generation
6 to generation; he has done valiantly with the strength
7 of his arm, driving the proud astray in the imagination
8 of their hearts; he has put down the mighty from their
seat, and exalted the lowly; he has filled the hungry
with good things, and sent the rich away empty-handed.
9 He has protected his servant Israel, keeping his merci-
10 ful design in remembrance, according to the promise
which he made to our forefathers, Abraham and his
posterity for evermore.

SONG OF ZACHARY

Luke 1:68-79

2 **B**LESSED be the Lord, the God of Israel; he has visited
his people, and wrought their redemption. / He has
3 raised up a sceptre of salvation for us among the pos-
terity of his servant David, according to the promise
4 which he made by the lips of holy men that have been
his prophets from the beginning; salvation from our
5 enemies, and from the hand of all those who hate
us. So he would carry out his merciful design towards
6 our fathers, by remembering his holy covenant. He
7 had sworn an oath to our father Abraham, that he
would enable us to live without fear in his service,

8 delivered from the hand of our enemies, passing all
9 our days in holiness, and approved in his sight. And
thou, my child, wilt be known for a prophet of the
most High, going before the Lord, to clear his way
10 for him; thou wilt make known to his people the
11 salvation that is to release them from their sins. Such
is the merciful kindness of our God, which has bidden
12 him come to us, like a dawning from on high, to give
light to those who live in darkness, in the shadow of
death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

SONG OF SIMEON

Luke 2:29-32

2 **R**ULER of all, now dost thou let thy servant go in
3 peace, according to thy word; for my own eyes
4 have seen that saving power of thine which thou hast
prepared in the sight of all nations. This is the light
which shall give revelation to the Gentiles, this is the
glory of thy people Israel.

INDEX OF PSALMS

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Page</i>
1	1	35	47
2	1	36	48
3	3	37	51
4	3	38	52
5	5	39	54
6	6	40	56
7	7	41	57
8	8	42	58
9A	9	43	59
9B	11	44	61
10	13	45	63
11	14	46	64
12	15	47	65
13	15	48	66
14	16	49	68
15	17	50	70
16	18	51	72
17	20	52	73
18	23	53	74
19	25	54	75
20	26	55	77
21	27	56	78
22	30	57	79
23	30	58	80
24	31	59	82
25	33	60	83
26	34	61	84
27	35	62	86
28	36	63	87
29	37	64	88
30	38	65	89
31	40	66	91
32	41	67	91
33	43	68	95
34	45	69	98

<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Page</i>
70	98	111	166
71	100	112	167
72	102	113A	167
73	104	113B	168
74	107	114	169
75	108	115	170
76	109	116	171
77	110	117	171
78	116	118	173
79	117	119	182
80	119	120	183
81	120	121	184
82	121	122	184
83	122	123	185
84	124	124	186
85	125	125	186
86	126	126	187
87	127	127	188
88	129	128	189
89	132	129	189
90	134	130	190
91	135	131	191
92	136	132	193
93	137	133	193
94	138	134	194
95	139	135	195
96	140	136	197
97	142	137	198
98	142	138	199
99	143	139	201
100	144	140	202
101	145	141	204
102	147	142	205
103	148	143	206
104	151	144	207
105	154	145	209
106	157	146	210
107	160	147	211
108	161	148	211
109	164	149	212
110	165	150	213

THE CANTICLES

<i>Page</i>	<i>Page</i>
The Song of Moses.....214	The Song of Isaias.....227
The Song of Moses.....215	The Song of Jeremy.....228
The Song of Anna.....220	The Song of the Three Young Men.....229
The Song of David.....221	The Song of Habacuc.....231
The Song of Tobias.....222	The Song of the Blessed Vir- gin Mary.....233
The Song of Judith.....223	The Song of Zachary.....234
The Song of Ecclesiasticus..224	The Song of Simeon.....235
The Song of Isaias.....225	
The Song of Ezechias.....225	